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Black and Minority Ethnic Young People: Exploring The Silences in The Scottish Highlands

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'Race disappears into the seams of sociality, invisibly holding the social fabric together even as it tears apart.'

(David Theo Goldberg, 2006: 339)

'Given that we do not have a culture of adults listening to young people, then adults listening to children and young people is a political act, and one that we need to continually improve.'

(Nairn, 2005:17)

'All human beings belong to a single species and share a common origin. They are born equal in dignity and rights and all form an integral part of humanity. All peoples of the world possess equal faculties for attaining the highest level in intellectual, technical, social, economic, cultural and political development. The differences between the achievements of the different people are entirely attributable to geographical, historical, political, economic, social and cultural factors. Such differences can in no case serve as a pretext for any rank ordered classification of nations or peoples'.

Source: 'Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice' adopted by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, Article I.1978.

Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is a composition of my original research work, except where acknowledgement is made below.

Patricia Cacho

Acknowledgements and Gratitude

This Ph.D. has been a long journey full of challenges for me, with my personal life changing during the time of my studies. Nevertheless, despite my issues and weaknesses, responsibilities and struggles, I have to be grateful to my Ph.D. program, as it has been a pathway and a safe place of profound learning, in a subject I feel passionate about.

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Abstract

In this thesis I analyse the dynamics of youth, race and rurality by considering the life experiences of young people in relation to race and racism through a small –scale study I have conducted over eight months. The study also investigates the aspirations of eight black and minority ethnic young people living in the Scottish Highlands.

The study found that young people's experiences of racism and racial microaggressions were exacerbated by a 'conspiracy of silence' in which institutional actors such as service providers, who are there to support and encourage young people, have knowingly, or inadvertently, contributed to undermining, marginalising and excluding black and minority ethnic young people through misunderstanding or misrecognition of experiences of racialisation in rural areas.

I observed how these minority young people engaged in strategies of resistance and resilience as a prevalent response when negotiating racist experiences and racial microaggressions. It was further evident that the deficient practices of institutional actors, such as teachers, youth workers and most service providers play a tangible role in perpetuating racism and racial discrimination in the Highlands.

The study recommends that to reduce bias and discrimination against black and minority ethnic pupils requires a range of strategies ranging from enhancing teacher confidence in teaching and addressing different forms of racism, a need for teachers to have training on anti-racist education and pedagogical approaches, recruitment of black and minority ethnic practitioners for different service provision, recognition and promotion of the benefits of multilingualism and opportunities for white majority pupils to have greater exposure to diversity in rural Scotland.

Keywords: race, racism, racial microaggressions, rurality, young people, silences, institutional actors, resistance and resilience.

Table of Contents

The Eight Young Participants in this Research

Eva: a twenty-two-year-old Eastern European migrant female, working and studying in a remote village in the Highlands.

Lala: a twenty-year-old Black African female who grew up in a remote village in the Highlands from the age of six and is currently living and working in a large Scottish town.

Linda: a seventeen-year-old Eastern European female, studying at an accessible village where she arrived a year and a half ago.

Maria: a sixteen-year-old mixed British/Spanish female, born and studying in the Highlands.

Paul: a seventeen-year-old White Scottish male, born and studying in the Highlands. He is Maria's brother.

Sara: a fifteen-year-old Black Caribbean female, studying at an accessible village. She is Linda's schoolmate.

Zach: a seventeen-year-old English/Chinese male, born in England and studying at a remote village in the Highlands from the age of nine.

Zafirah: a seventeen-year-old Black African female, living and studying in a remote village since she was four. She is Lala's sister.

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Chapter 1: Introduction: The story to this thesis

'It doesn't matter how hard times teachers can give you, but you have to believe in you… everything could happen if you proof people they are wrong.'

(Lala, twenty, black, remote)

Lala's words echo experiences of the potentially continuing struggle for black and minority ethnic young people at rural schools. They also speak of the resistance and resilience of a young person towards the adults, in this case teachers, around her. They recall how race, age and rurality, when intersecting, can trigger responses of racism, xenophobia and racial discrimination. This is a sad fact I have witnessed during the nearly thirty years I have taught in rural schools in Madrid and is the initial reason for writing this thesis.

Accordingly, understanding how race and ethnicity impact on and intersect with geography and age on the daily life experiences and future aspirations of young minority people will be the primary focus of this study. For that purpose, I will need to discuss the importance of unpacking the ways in which education and the rural community are shaping, or not shaping, these experiences and aspirations, meanwhile noting the significant role of space and youth as aspects of race.

So I will explore how space, and access to power and to equitable educational experiences for these rural minority ethnic youth, are perceived. In addition, I will expose the disparities

that may exist between what is claimed for race equality policies and what is practised in everyday life.

From my life's experience as a teacher, I learnt that education is essential in addressing and tackling racist and bigoted attitudes in our societies, and that it should start, as Arshad et al. (2005) mentioned, from an early age. In seeking further knowledge, anti-racist education emerged as the principal tool for achieving such a goal.

Through myriad readings over the last few years, I have been able to elucidate how anti-racism pedagogy engages profoundly in active processes of identifying, dismantling and eliminating racism and race productions at schools and in education, thus proving essential for this project. In this journey I have also learnt, as de Lima proclaims (2001), that anti-racist education should take place even if there are no black or minority children or young people in the schools or the rural communities.

The presence of race is powerful in our societies. As Theo Goldberg (2006: 339) has explained, race, even if absent from the discussion, is always there: '…race disappears into the seams of sociality, invisibly holding the social fabric together even as it tears apart'. Consequently, race seems to be constantly operating in our lives and, simultaneously, race seems to be imaginary, an illusion, a social creation and buried in persistent silences. Yet, race seems permeated with issues of power, privileges, and potential suffering. When I pondered what lay behind the uneven distribution of power around race issues, there emerged a race colour rarely discussed: 'white'. I saw how this last is generating, perhaps, the existence of oppressors and oppressed in positions around race and providing a plausible explanation for the suffering, as we will explore in the next chapter.

In connection with age, I would also like to be able to draw out how race works differently for different young people, adopting the critical lens through which young people's experiences can no longer be perceived as homogenised by their race, by their positioning in relation to characteristics such as gender or class, or by their status within their family,

school and/or other social circumstances. Consequently, I will acknowledge young people as agents capable of negotiating their own lives.

Given the rural geography of my study, I found it necessary to attend to critical geography and to the ways in which spaces intersecting with race can shape young lives. As an example, the intersection of geography and race is currently expanding and altering race productions and racism as a result of human flows in search of better life conditions across the planet, and more precisely in Europe (see for example Hockenos, 1993; Stolcke, 1995; Bell, 2008; Law, 2013; Bruff, 2014). I observed how this human movement is followed by rising responses of xenophobia and exclusion across Europe.

Indeed, contemporary racism and xenophobia seem to be better explained by considering not only exclusion over skin colour and phenotypes, but also over culture, whether in relation to religion, language, clothes or nationality. Hence, ethnicity and culture have been recognised as societal markers for racial discrimination and social exclusion in the twenty-first century (see, for example, Eriksen, 2002; Lamont and Molnár, 2002; de Lima, 2008). These changes in the intersection of race and geography are, perhaps, echoed in this thesis.

Thus, this thesis will be an important contribution to the creation of race theory for Scotland, with a focus on one part of North rural Scotland: The Highlands. It will aim to introduce the concept of race within youth studies, and to do so within the critical lenses offered by Critical Race Theory. Consequently, this study will use the concept of 'intersectionality' (Crenshaw, 1991), explained in Chapter Four, to unveil the convergence of race, geography and age discussed above. My study will look into the life experiences and aspirations of eight black and minority young people and how they are living their difference, culture and skin colour, in the space of a secondary school or their rural community.

It was partly in order to carry out this project that I took the decision to leave a safe and comfortable career as a secondary teacher and embark on a journey which has completely changed my life in the course, and as a result, of producing this thesis.

1.1. Why Black and Minority Ethnic Young People?

I arrived in the UK in the second half of 2008, after working as a rural secondary teacher for the Madrid Region Government for over thirty years. There, I collaborated with the most deprived pupils, including black and minority ethnic young people, the most recently encountered ones having arrived with their families during the years of economic growth in Spain. The minority young people came mainly from North Africa, Latin America and Eastern Europe, joining a poverty-stricken neighbourhood immersed in social disadvantages, with inadequate services, in the Southern outskirts of Madrid.

Influenced by the political changes in Spain following Franco's death in 1975, I sought to study Sociology and finally focused on Social Anthropology. This choice was, at first, a response to the backlash experienced by our Spanish society during the harsh and unyielding Franco dictatorship lasting over forty years.

And yet, the election of Social Anthropology was probably also the result of fascination with other cultures from as far back as I can remember: perhaps influenced by a father who encouraged me to observe, admire, and learn from other cultures and languages from an early age.

Indeed, the allure of learning from these other cultures meant that, emboldened by parental enthusiasm, I spent extended periods living and studying abroad as a teenager. This experience, plausibly, made it easy to distance myself from Spanish culture and additionally, perhaps, to look at the cultures of so-called 'Northern Europe' through new critical lenses.

At the time I started to be aware of uneven power relationships between countries in the North and South of Europe, and the potential impact of this factor in shaping our life experiences as Europeans. Perhaps I wondered why Spain was presented as part of a 'black' Mediterranean geographical area for many northern Europeans (Rhodes, 2001), and one

‘with little influence over the decision-making process’ in the continent (Díez Medrano, 2003: 64).

But my interest in social inequalities and social justice is probably also explained by a period during my earliest youth when I volunteered for several years at an NGO supporting young people with physical disabilities. There I participated in an inclusion project that worked to empower disenfranchised peers in Madrid. More recently, I combined my job as a teacher with helping newly arrived African women by assisting them in learning Spanish and in finding their first job in the country.

During the years of study at university, I availed myself with a passion of any opportunity to seek social change in our country. It was at that time that I engaged first with Critical Theory and devoured authors like Marx, Engels, Bakunin, Kropotkin, Harnecker, Rosa Luxemburg, and Althusser, among many other influential thinkers, in the process of developing a critical consciousness about unfair social conditions and of seeking social justice.

While studying Social Anthropology, I imbibed the works of authors who gave me a dimension of ‘seeing’ and valuing ‘the Other’ (for example Beattie, 1964; Lévi-Strauss, 1966; Harris, 1974; Leach, 1976; Meillasoux, 1981, among others). In that period, the works of Franz Boas (1848-1942) were particularly inspiring, triggering a further interest in racial and cultural inequalities. His long friendship with W.E.B. Du Bois (DeMott, 2013) grew out of Boas’s support for black people as equals, against the overtly racist attitudes in the scientific community at the time. Boas’s anti-racist stance thus helped to link a foundation in social anthropology with this study, when, for example, he claimed: ‘If we were to select the most intelligent, imaginative, energetic, and emotionally stable third of mankind, all races would be represented’ (Boas, 1929: 75). Thus, the literature encountered during those years helped to provide a foundation for the analytical and critical lenses employed in this thesis.

From my latest readings I have added further theoretical support, providing the necessary perspective to engage with the concepts of 'Whiteness' and 'White Privilege', the paradigm of Critical Race Theory, and Solórzano's theory of racial microaggressions. A vast portion of this literature has been narrated by authors from the USA, thus creating some difficulty with terminology when referring to the UK context within an anti-racist framework originating across the Atlantic. This challenge needed to be acknowledged in this thesis. Indeed, the choice of those works, together with works of Scottish, British and European scholars, was made in the hope of bringing a more compelling stance to this study.

Following university, I married a few years later and divorced after a short marriage, becoming a single mother with two young children. Coming from a very traditional and religious family, for whom a divorce was perceived as a stain on its honour, I experienced adverse consequences for my social life in Spain. This marked me with a stigma and sense of rejection.

I believe that becoming a secondary teacher had a healing effect on the feelings of discrimination and exclusion I experienced at the time. Indeed, my job as a teacher gave me the opportunity to feel helpful in relation to a diverse range of pupils, which included those from other cultures. I found teaching black and minority young people particularly rewarding as it provided an excuse to engage with issues of diversity, reviving an old interest in racial equality gained from social anthropology. Then, I had the further opportunity to challenge stereotypes and prejudices against the young people on the part of various individuals within the staff and among their peers. It also provided an excellent chance to learn from our minority pupils' culture and language, which they esteemed positively, and to observe the impact that empathy and motivation had on their learning process.

This experience as a teacher aroused a particular interest in finding a better approach to improving minority young people's experiences and, as I hoped, to extending this pursuit to any black and minority youth in rural secondary schools and communities.

Hence, when I took the decision to move to Scotland, the new location raised the long-sought possibility of developing my interest in research on minority ethnic pupils in secondary education, something I had previously tried to pursue back in Spain, but without success. This motive was accompanied by a profound wish to live in a culture different from my own.

Thus, the focus of my thesis was strengthened by the move to Scotland, where I too became a minority ethnic person who now had to operate in my second language. This affected my confidence, esteem and well-being. Indeed, I wondered: if this was happening to me as an adult, what would the impact be on a young person with less life experience in the rural context?

I am, therefore, conscious of the innovative, radical and significant nature of this study, and of how this thesis may, it is hoped, bring awareness of the circumstances experienced by black and minority young people in rural contexts.

Last but not least, to complete the story of this thesis, it is important to pay attention to the geographical area it covers: why the rural landscape of the Highlands? This needs some consideration, which will be undertaken next.

1.2. Why Scotland and why the Highlands?

The decision to locate this thesis in a rural Scottish context largely stemmed from a Master's study I conducted in 2010. The theme for my dissertation was 'Induction for minority pupils in secondary schools in Scotland'. The small-scale research, contrasted a rural and an urban school in Scotland, revealing a wide gap in practices and understanding of matters of race and racism (Cacho, 2010, unpublished).

The study demonstrated the quality of the interaction between the ways newly arrived bilingual minority ethnic pupils were received by the urban and the rural school, differed fairly significantly. The practices of the rural school were 'ad-hoc' and did not adhere to any obvious race-equality or other policy, and there was a persistent denial by the staff of issues of racism. My finding chiming with scholars who have looked at racism in mainly white schools and denied it (see Donald et al., 1995; Gaine, 2005).

Additionally, the rural school was less likely to talk about racism or race equality, preferring to use the term 'inclusion' when discussing race equality matters. As a result, issues of race and racism were subsumed or lost within this generic term. This phenomenon of avoiding discussions about racism is not new and has been addressed in other research related to racism and education in Scotland (Arshad et al., 2005; Caulfield et al., 2005).

My dissertation concluded that there was a need for a national anti-racist education policy across Scotland, which would provide for a more coordinated and robust response among schools towards their minority ethnic pupils. It also highlighted the essential role education can have in tackling bullying and racist attitudes in secondary schools where there are black and minority ethnic young people. Indeed, the reality at present is that, with thirty-two authorities in Scotland and no central guidance, the quality of minority ethnic pupils' experience remains extemporaneous and dependent on whether or not the school maintains powerful anti-racist practices.

Finally, my dissertation study also identified the need to explore the life experiences and aspirations of black and minority ethnic young people in rural Scotland as a gap area that required more attention and research.

Thus, drawing on the above, the reason for locating this study in the Highlands links with the fact that the rural school examined in the dissertation was located there. Additionally, it was significant for the geographical choice to be aware of two social elements here. Firstly, Scotland, being the Highlands no exception, has experienced an increase of migration (National Records for Scotland, 2015) since the beginning of the 21st century.

Second, the acknowledgement rural racism and racial discrimination have been a reality across the British countryside, Scotland and the rural area of the Highlands being no exception (Chakraborti and Garland, 2004; de Lima, 2008a).

The Scottish Government has welcomed migration in part to boost the economy but also to build capacity, and mitigating the problem of ageing, in sparsely populated areas such as the Highlands (NRS, December 2015: 6). Migration in the past ten years has largely been from A8[1] countries (Metcalf and Rolfe, 2009; Scottish Government, 2011).

In addition, the work of Chakraborti and Garland (2004) points out that the black and minority ethnic population tend to avoid rural areas because of the higher rate of racist incidents they can experience there. Overall, silences and invisibility over racism, xenophobia and race productions seem to become even more acute in rural settlements as a result of geography. An explanation might be the remoteness of some areas and the potential ease of identifying minorities which may be acting as constrainers to discourage victims of racist attacks from reporting them (see Jedrej and Nuttall, 1996, de Lima, 2002, 2006).

Despite the increase in minority population and the accountancy for racist incidents (see for example, *The Guardian*, 16.02.2016), one of the main challenges this study has encountered is the dearth of research and literature about race and ethnicity in rural Scotland, with the exception of one author: Philomena de Lima, as we will see in Chapter Three. Indeed, most studies exploring racism and race productions in Scotland have been conducted in urban areas (see Stead et al., 1999; Arshad, 1999, 2002, 2004; Caulfield et al., 2005; Hill et al., 2007; Netto, et al., 2011).

[1] A8 countries refers to the countries joining the European Union in 2004. These are: Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia.
(see www.news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/panorama/4479759.stm)

Nevertheless, the limited but valuable existing work from de Lima has confirmed the ethnic tension between the host and the minority ethnic population in the Highlands.

Additionally, from around the mid-2000s, research on race and, in particular, race in relation to education, has been minimal to non-existent. Such absence of race research in rural education brings further confirmation of the need for this work.

Finally, to promote a better understanding of this thesis, I will map the content of this work in a next section.

1.3. Mapping This Thesis

Since setting the borders, that is, the limits, is one of the principal challenges in current race discussions (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1993; Meer, 2014), in the hope of clarifying the terms I will first traverse the concepts of race, racism and racialisation through diverse race authors, in Chapter Two. Through that discussion, I will introduce briefly the theoretical framework to this thesis: Critical Race Theory to extend in Chapter Four. Critical Race Theory will uncover two essential themes within this thesis: *whiteness* and *silences*.

To understand what could be behind the silences, we will explore the British and Scottish advances in race relations since WW II, pausing in the processes of racialisation in Scotland next. From there I will look into what is happening in anti-racist education in Scotland at the moment, and in particular by discussing the essential role education has been proven to play in tackling racist attitudes and promoting equality in society. I will finalise the chapter with a reminder of the most relevant policy in the UK, from the Macpherson Report to the Equality Act 2010, concluding with the most pertinent race equality policies launched by the Highland Council.

In Chapter Three, I will attend to the literature related to the understanding of matters of rurality and youth, with the aim of intersecting them with race. Given issues of rurality were probably impacting the perception of race in my study, I needed to incorporate the discussion that analyses geography critically, the related encounter with race (Neal and Agyeman, 2006; Dwyer and Bressey, 2008), and how this intersects with youth (Hopkins, 2007; Panelli et al., 2007). Thus, exploring rurality from the perspective of critical rural authors will bring the opportunity to problematise white colour, incorporating whiteness and the way it applies to rural landscapes.

Considering that this work explores young people I will also survey some critical youth studies in this chapter. Indeed, I found it necessary to consolidate the body of literature problematising youth experiences and defended by youth scholars. Here I will examine, for example, the concepts of 'transition' and 'aspirations'. The first calls for the understanding needed to disentangle methods of negotiation by contemporary young people in connection with the 'journey' between education and the search for a career. In considering the second concept, which looks into life aspirations, I will seek to comprehend what youth authors mean by aspirations, and whether it involves any specificities attached to minority rural youth. Finally, by exploring the convergence of the three main, socially constructed, variables of this study: race, youth and geography – a convergence that embodies the principle of intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1991) and is fully developed in Chapter Four – I hope to bring revolutionary and radical change into the discourse of race and racism in rural youth studies.

Thus, to accomplish the latter purpose, this thesis incorporates the lenses drawn from CRT and Solórzano's racial microaggressions theory (Solórzano and Yosso, 2000) for the first time in rural youth studies, in Chapter Four. I will do so in the hope of contributing to the scarce, but valuable rural youth body of literature around race. Thus, with confidence in achieving further clarity, when possible, about minority rural young people's experiences. There I will explain the methodology of this research, with its epistemology in CRT and racial microaggressions, and the reasons for that choice; as well as how CRT is applied to this thesis and how it operates. Thus, I will outline how the complexity of this study, by bringing together three different narratives: race, age and geography, has adopted

intersectionality, borrowed from black feminist studies, as an excellent political and useful tool with which to accompany CRT (Crenshaw, 1991).

Additionally, the advantageous methodological tool of counter-storytelling derived from CRT (Delgado and Stefancic, 2006) has enabled this study to document the voices of the long unheard: the black and minority young people in a rural area in Scotland.

A further section will present this study's research question and the secondary questions it generates, followed by the methods being utilised to provide the information sought by the research questions. Later, I will explain how the data analysis of this study is performed, with the process of coding outlined in detail.

Finally, in this chapter I will examine the concepts of trustworthiness, authenticity, ethics and reflexivity in relation to this study: all these factors being seen through the critical lenses adopted by this work.

Chapter Five will emerge as the core of this study, analysing the experiences of its eight young participants through their narratives and counter-stories. This will be discussed and underpinned by the body of literature discussed in Chapters Two and Three. Their stories bringing a reflection of what their experiences are, at the rural school and the community, what aspirations they would like to achieve and what potential connection, if any, could be between the two.

Completing the young people's accounts, Chapter Six will enrich their stories with views from the adults around them – parents, teachers, youth workers and third sector agents. This chapter will introduce the concept of 'institutional actors'. This subject will be discussed by contrasting the disparate expectations of what schools should be, and contrasting the minority young people and parents with what practitioners and educational institutions envisage for them. From there the chapter will explore the practices of teachers, career advisers and youth workers in relation to the minority young people and the potential advantages of being a minority practitioner. Finally, the chapter will look into rhetoric

about race relation policies in the Highlands and the potential divergence with current practices.

Finally, in conclusion, I will summarise the theoretical contribution of this study, from exploring the silences to CRT and the varied nature of those silences. Then, through the literature of critical youth and rural studies, this thesis will claim that rural youth studies urgently need to incorporate a framework empowering minority rural young people to achieve a deeper negotiation of fairness within social justice. Next, I will answer all the research questions of this work. I will also seek to identify the changes necessary to improve the life experiences of future black and minority ethnic young people living in rural Scotland; the thesis will thus ask what needs to be done to achieve a better understanding of diversity and to promote effective race equality for youth in rural areas. All the previous steps will be taken in the hope and with the unassuming aim of placing this thesis within the arena of social justice.

2

Chapter 2: Race, Racism and Racialisation in Scotland: Exploring the Silences

'*First year was fine but then even fifth year, every now and then, I had to deal like racial…. with racial stuff… I don't expect really anyone to help me with that…I have to deal with it myself.*'

(Zach, seventeen, Asian, remote)

'*…One must not look for the gross and obvious. The subtle, cumulative miniassault is the substance of today's racism'*.

(Pierce, 1974:516 cited in Solórzano, 1998:60)

Introduction

The approach to race and racism is the subject of abiding debates in academia: starting with the attempt to establish the limits, the connections and disconnections, between all the terminologies involved in the race discourse. How to set the boundaries around difference (see for example Young, 1990; Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1993; Meer, 2014: 14) can be challenging. Should we or shouldn't we use the term 'race' and how? What is or is not racism, and who is susceptible to the experience of it? Who is 'black' or 'white', or minority ethnic? Consequently, current borders in the realm of difference over race seem to be intertwined, even conflated, inside an ocean of social, political, geographical and, of course, theoretical discussions.

In contrast to the passion of race scholars, race and racism are barely discussed in Scottish streets/forums: the silences, possibly, resulting in the contested nature of the terms (Bhopal and Preston, 2012: 1). Or, perhaps the silences are grounded partly in a social belief that the idea of race is a current anecdotal illusion, stemming from a historical drama of the past, an aberration that has arisen at another time and place (see Fields, 1990; Gillborn, 2005: 488; Epstein, 2009). Or maybe the silences here are, in addition, the consequence of self-complacent assumptions that Scotland, regarded as an egalitarian nation with an inclusive educational system (see OECD Report, 2015), might be in a post-racial era (CERES conference, June 2015). Thus, with race equality policies in place and a belief that racism is no longer seen as an issue in Scotland, racism and race productions seem to be under-theorised in this part of the country (see Dunlop, 1993; Arshad, 2002) and, this thesis will argue, even silenced.

To refute the above-mentioned attitudes, I will firstly voyage across the concepts of race and racism through a variety of stances adopted by race theorists: from Marxists to later postmodernist and current anti-racist discourses in the UK and across the Atlantic. The intention is to hopefully bring some clarity to the terms. In the discussion I will explore the idea of 'cultural racism' and the potential connection with xenophobia. To complete the race discussion, I will explore the concept of racialisation and how it has enriched the narrative of race. From there I will briefly introduce Critical Race Theory as the theoretical lens for this thesis, to be expanded on in Chapter Four. Through Critical Race Theory two essential elements in current race discourse will emerge: whiteness and silences, and how they both play a significant role in this thesis. Firstly, pausing on whiteness studies, we will unpack the terminology around 'white privilege' and 'white hierarchy' and how they are understood in the race discussion. This is essential here, by reason of the predominantly white character of the Scottish population. Second, we will explore the silences of many people, including educators, in relation to the difficulty of verbalising 'racism' and 'race': the silencing providing a key theme of this study.

From there, to look into the potential source of the silences, I will briefly outline the history of race relations literature in the UK from post-World War II to the end of the last century. This will be followed by the Scottish race discourse history, and then by the question: who

is the 'racialised other' (Virdee, 2014) in this part of the country? The intention is to attempt to elucidate the proposed theoretical foundations of this thesis and what they will mean in the context of my study.

Last but not least, this chapter will conclude by exploring pivotal race policies in the UK from the Macpherson report to the Equality Act 2010. From there we will explore how anti-racist research has been deployed in Scotland, and incorporate the significant role of education in disrupting silences. Thus, after acknowledging how anti-racist pedagogy is enlightening and re-educating people about racist attitudes and race productions, I will further pursue this theme by looking into what the actual discourse is in Scottish Education and research and what is missing.

2.1. Race, Racism and Racialisation: traversing the terms. Is Race Real?

The notion of 'race' is a modern creation. As Leonardo (2012: 24) explains, race is 'traceable to the beginning of European colonization and capitalist expansion'. Its relevance is seen as coterminous with 'the process of worldmaking' (ibid.): for example, with how the West, or Occident, has built up the imaginary idea of the East, or Orient, through domination and moulding of this concept, or how the idea of 'the black Mediterranean' has been ideally constructed by Europe. Thus, for Leonardo, race implies a process of creation of an 'external group' while, simultaneously, such creation defines 'the creator' (ibid.).

Having emerged from a discredited biological background, race was originally used during the 17th century to justify the claim that some races were superior to others (see for example Sivanandan, 1979; Gilroy, 1987; Miles, 1989). Disputing the scientific race classification, Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1993:2) interprets such categorisation as a historical product when she states: 'Race typologies which derive from a scientific racism, which purported

to specify criteria for designating individuals to phenotypical types, has been both a historical product and totally discredited'.

Anthias and Yuval-Davis, together with Leonardo's words, remind us of two important facts here, one being the significant impact of colonial times in the construction of race. The second is that race is socially imagined; it responds to a social construction and mainly grounded on that colonial period.

Burdened with the legacy of colonialism and the slave trade, Britain, as a Western participant in these practices, has shaped the construction of the idea of race which is impacting on current race relations in the world, in Europe, and in the country (Gilroy, 1982). That circumstance extends to Scotland, as we will see later.

Indeed, most of the race ideology developed with the Atlantic slave economy in the USA, followed by the period of colonialism in Africa and India. Thus, its origins lie in justification of the slave trade, the colonial period of the British Empire and other European countries, and the quasi-sciences of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Warmington, 2009). Such an outlook prevailed throughout colonial times, when overt expressions of racism were commonly accepted social behaviour, inspiring little debate (Gilroy, 1993), up to the emergence of egalitarian movements, first in Europe and then in the USA during the eighteenth century. Then, such overt assumptions of racial inequality gradually began to be considered indecorous.

To illustrate the above, Kovel (1970) defined three ideal types of racism through history: 'dominant racism,' 'aversive' and 'metaracism'. The first type is related to the overt expression mentioned before, embodying direct mastery and having its highest manifestation in enslavement. It could also include genocide and policies that privilege certain whites over other minorities, as was the case in the Nazi era or more recently in Bosnia (Hinton, 2002). The second type, aversive racism, or covert racism, under the influence of egalitarianism and probably reflecting a Calvinist stance along with puritan ideas (see Weber 1930), has been described as an unconscious manifestation of racism

(Quillian, 2008; Pearson et al., 2009). Metaracism appears when any conscious commitment to racial superiority has disappeared but remains insofar as 'the grinding processes of a white-dominated economy and technology account for the continued misery of many people of colour' (Young, 1990: 141).

Nevertheless, despite the good intentions brought about by egalitarian ideologies and the shift from overt to gradual and subtle or 'aversive/metaracist' practices, as seen above, the fact is that racism persists in our day (Gilroy, 2002; Solomos, 2003 Agyeman and Singer, 2014; Singleton, 2015), and probably in the three forms described by Kovel. Indeed, subtle or covert racist attitudes could be responsible for obscuring questions about race and racism. It seems that the embedded racism dating from colonial times has underlain the British social structure (Sivanandan, 1982; Gilroy, 1993; Gillborn, 2008) and, as I will argue here, following, for example, Hopkins (2004) and Devine (2015), extended to the Scottish social structure.

To the historical and social character of race, Gilroy, in his work 'There Ain't no Black in the Union Jack' (1987) incorporates, together with Miles (1989), the economic and political construction of race, which ensures and maintains the diverse forms of 'racialisation' in the capitalist system. As Gilroy explains:

'"Race" has to be socially and politically constructed and elaborate ideological work is done to secure and maintain the different forms of "racialization" which have characterised capitalist development'. (Gilroy, 1987: 35)

Agreeing with Gilroy, Gunaratnam (2003: 4) has reflected on the social, economical and political connotations of race and racism, with racism being the consequence of race, which she defines as 'the organizing discursive category around which has been constructed a system of socio-economic power, exploitation and exclusion'. Consequently, race emerging as a historical, social, economical and a political structure behind practices of racial domination and marginalisation.

As well as the concept of race, the notion of ‘racism’ is a relatively modern production (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1993). It has emerged to provide the necessary articulation with which to claim discrimination according to any ideology of race, overriding the bases of the old and refuted biological meaning of the word. The term ‘racism’ was first used in the USA when the voices of the black community were beginning to be heard during the 1930s. Indeed, the use of the word ‘racism’ helped to politicise the race discourse, when condemning racial discrimination from a clear and committed political approach (Miles, 1989, 1993).

Given the painful historical controversy surrounding the term ‘race’, Miles (1993) argues that its use should be eliminated, as he believes it probably helps to bolster racism and race productions. He has favoured concentrating on the word ‘racism’ instead. Current anti-racist authors (see for example Ladson-Billings, 1998; Delgado and Stefancic, 2012; Warmington, 2014) logically agree with Miles about focusing on racism in the race discussion but reject his aim of eradicating the word. Indeed, Miles's contemporary Gilroy (2002:11) has criticised his gesture, arguing that his suggestion represents a futile wish ‘to eliminate racism by eliminating the word’.

From an opposite perspective, Back and Solomos (2009) and Todorov (2000) claim, among others, that the term ‘race’ is still applicable and operational in social research. This is because visual difference and the reality of mixed races, as Todorov (2000:65) explains, form the common view of the man in the street:

‘who can see perfectly well that the differences exist. From this individual’s viewpoint the only properties that count are the immediately visible ones: skin color, body hair, facial configuration. Furthermore, the fact that there are individuals or even whole populations that are the product of mixing does not invalidate the notion of race but actually confirms it’.

Following the discussion, Winant (2000) argues that the notion of race is immanent in our societies. Explaining how it has operated, and still does, through history and how it manifests commonly and naturally across the globe as part of our identity, he argues:

'The longevity of the race concept and the enormous number of effects of race thinking (and race acting) has produced a guarantee that race will remain a feature of social reality across the globe … at the level of experiences of everyday life, race is a relatively impermeable part of our identity … To be raceless is akin to be genderless.' (Winant, 2000: 184)

More recent criticism of the emphasis on race viewed as a fantasy, has been led by Leonardo (2005) in his work 'Through the Multicultural Glass'. Applying Althusser's ideology to race, Leonardo argues that the insistence on the ideological illusion of race is probably responsible for building a vague discourse about racism which points to and then away from race as a critical problem. Thus, following Leonardo and Warmington, I agree that when we adopt the stance 'race is not real', by eliminating or enclosing the term within inverted commas, although the assertion is true in essence, we potentially create and regenerate silences around racism and race productions in current race relations discourse, as we will explore later.

Drawing on the above, as Warmington (2009: 283) has reminded us, the effects of race in current societies 'are all too real; race may lack scientific integrity, but it is a lived experience, a lived relationship'.

The significant role of social class in the race discussion needs some reflection following the Marxists' contributions, as we will see next.

2.1.1. Race and Social Class

Along the short history in race discourse forums, different tendencies have faced diverse criticism over the approach to race. From a structural stance, Bonilla-Silva (1997) in his work 'Rethinking Racism: Toward a Structural Interpretation', has criticised Marxists, such as Miles, and mainstream social scientists' understanding, as Weberians are, of race phenomena, when he perceives that researchers will become 'entangled in ungrounded ideological views of racism' (Bonilla de-Silva, 1997: 475), if they do not adopt a structural framework. He argues that Marxist analysts will 'reduce racial phenomena to a derivation of the class structure' while mainstream social scientists 'will view these phenomena as the result of an irrational ideology' (ibid.). Thus, both tendencies, Marxists and Weberians, viewed by structuralisms as blurring rather than illuminating the race discussion.

Nevertheless, despite all criticism, the materialist Marxist analysis of race within the contested nature of capitalism as propounded by Miles (1986, 1989b, 2003) and Gilroy (1987, 1993, 2004) has been much celebrated in the race discourse. This is the point at which the convergence between race and class becomes undeniable in current anti-racist discussions (see Leonardo, 2012; Gillborn, 2012).

At the end of the last century, Marxist views on race made way for the analytical framework of modernity and postmodernity at the hands of Anthias and Yuval-Davis. These scholars, criticised previous Weberianist reductionism for misrecognising minorities as an underclass (see Rex et al., 1979) and assuming homogeneity in minority communities within an 'indigenous class, not already divided' (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1993: 66).

The Postmodern approach to race has emerged to disengage the discourse from previous Marxist discussions based on class struggle. Although Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1993) agree with accepting the link between class formation and race, they also claim that the race discussion needs further/updated lenses that would allow the incorporation of newly emerging social concepts of globalisation, consumption, post-industrialism and additional complex identity formations within it.

From a poststructuralist racial framework, Winant, together with Michael Omi, agree race is neither scientific, nor they see it as an invention, following previous criticism to Marxists authors (see Hill Collins and Solomos, 2010: 157). Indeed, for Omi and Winant (1994: 55) race is a notion 'which signifies and symbolises social conflicts and interests by referring to different types of human bodies'. They believe that to fully understand racial dynamics, one needs to see it as the result of the redistribution of resources along specific racial lines. To understand what it is to be racist entails grasping what it is that 'creates or reproduces structures of domination based on essential categories of race' (Omi and Winant, 1994: 71).

Despite the valuable contribution from Omi and Winant about racial categories and structures of domination, Feagin and Elias (2013), from a systemic racism framework, have criticised their work, arguing that they are evading an essential element to the formation of race and racism: 'white racial' input. Thus, claiming it is necessary to incorporate such element to pursue a further accurate and useful notion reflecting in-depth on racial oppression. Feagin and Elias argue, when analysing US racial matters, Omi and Winant have missed to explain: 'a white-generated racial oppression that has been foundational for several centuries' (Feagin and Elias, 2013: 955). Thus, for these authors, the misrecognition of socio-historical responsibilities from white oppression would lead to an 'evasive perspective on the actual racial structure and operation of US society' (ibid.). Feagin and Elias have lead us to the idea of 'whiteness': a significant element in contemporary race and racism discourse and for this thesis, as we will see later.

In addition, Marxist concept of class have been disputed to an even greater extent, when postmodern stances suggest the end of social class, as we have known it, and the beginning of a new era for social concepts, as Ulrich Beck (1992: 99) explains:

'Class does not disappear just because traditional ways of life fade away. Social classes are rather emancipated from regional restrictions … A new chapter in the history of classes is beginning … new sources for the formation of social bonds and for the development of conflicts arise'.

The new bonds Beck refers to are related to a myriad of 'differences and inequalities of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, age and so on' (ibid.). Yet, Beck acknowledges the reality that in present-day Britain class division still persists, and even post-modernists have to accept the fact that:

'Class membership is very apparent in everyday life and remains the object of consciousness and identification. It is evident in speech ... in the sharp class divisions in residential areas … in types of education, in clothing and in everything that can be included under the concept of lifestyle'. (Beck, 1992: 102)

Thus, both concepts – difference and inequality – remain in contemporary race discussions, as we will explore next.

2.1.2. Race and the concept of difference

To further illuminate, through postmodern lenses, the idea of difference in relation to race, the work of Young (1990) has brought significant awareness, when developing the concept, of unconscious social positions surrounding race. When Young, following Miles (1989), expands the idea of social exclusion in a racialised world, she explains that the exclusion is grounded on the position of the mainstream population who see themselves as included within the dominant culture. The power position of the mainstream group contrasts with the position assigned to, and accepted and internalised by the minority groups who are excluded from society by virtue of their difference. Through difference, minorities are 'othered', deemed to be what Miles and Young call the 'Other' and are thus excluded and perceived as different from the people of the dominant culture.

Consequently, the mainstream group will impose its views, so that, in seeking unity of thinking,

'the logic of identity thought seeks to bring everything under control, to eliminate uncertainty and unpredictability, to spiritualise the bodily fact of sensuous immersion in a world that out-runs the subject, to eliminate otherness' (Young, 1990: 98).

Thus, through her idea of difference, Young has gravely criticised earlier assimilationist stances in British society, explaining: 'The goal of assimilation holds up to people a demand that they "fit", be like the mainstream, in behaviour, values, and goals' (ibid.: 165).

In accordance with Young's ideas, Jim Cummins (2001) has contributed enlightening insights into the adverse role assimilationism plays in education, and the extent to which 'assimilation' is similar in many ways to 'exclusion', insofar as both orientations are designed to make the 'problem' disappear. Here Cummins refers to teachers' perception of the minority young people and children in their classrooms as a 'problem' for the schools, as a result of which they try to erase such differences; and so, perceiving 'difference' through negative lenses, as a burden, they develop the need for rejection. For Cummins (2001: 2):

'assimilationist policies in education discourage students from maintaining their mother tongues. If students retain their culture and language, then they are viewed as less capable of identifying with the mainstream culture and learning the dominant language of the society'.

Following Cummins, assimilationist practices are not only counterproductive for the minority young people's experiences at schools but, in addition, they block the opportunity to educate the host population itself about race literacy. He has seen such a constraint as especially relevant in an age of expanding globalisation.

Postmodern stances overemphasising the notions of 'difference' and 'diversity' and abandoning or sidelining the idea of 'equality' in the race discourse have also attracted some criticism. Flecha (1999) in his work 'Modern and Postmodern Racism in Europe: Dialogic Approach and Anti-racist Pedagogies' has objected to anti-racist educators who have withdrawn from the idea of 'equality' in race relations. Indeed, he believes that the emphasis on difference and diversity could be accountable for aggravating racism in contemporary Europe, when arguing that such stances encourage European 'neo-fascist'

groups who hold racist beliefs, using the concept of 'difference' 'to support their programs of hate' (1999: 152).

Flecha argues that there is a need for a 'dialogic approach' in current European education and defends a model based on the works of Habermas and Freire, which combines equality and difference and thus provides a theoretical framework challenging both 'ethnocentrist and relativist bases of current European racism' (ibid.).

Flecha's work deserves some consideration here when he calls for reflection on what might be at the core of expressions of racism in Europe, and I will extend this question to Scotland. Given the importance of the national discourse in the country, as we will see, his anti-racist stance of bringing back equality into the race discourse chimes with Arshad's narrative in emphasising the importance of taking race equality seriously in Scotland (2002, 2005).

To conclude, despite criticism, the shift towards postmodern approaches has made it possible to analyse myriad different types of racism and new ethnicities emerging and coexisting with cultural differences (Mac an Ghaill, 1999).

Beyond the consideration of social class, it is necessary to incorporate the inequality of gender in the discussion of race, and how race and ethnicity shape the life experiences of black and minority women, as we will see.

2.1.3. Gender and Race

Thus, what is distinctive in the racism and life experiences undergone by minority women, compared to those of men and of white women? Challenging white feminists and their ethnocentric view embodied in the concept of 'sisterhood', Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1993) claim that such a sense of 'sisterhood', although powerful and politically oriented, ignores the crucial role issues of race and ethnicity play in the experiences of women. Indeed, 'sisterhood', a term referring to a community of women, assumes a unitary category of all women as opposed to the 'patriarchal society'. In theory, gender, to some extent, is

constructed through class and economic relations. But in practice, Anthias and Yuval-Davis argue, the experiences for women will differ depending on the economic context, the different social classes, and their diversity of race and ethnicity. It is thanks to the contributions of 'Black feminists' (Hill Collins, 2009; Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1993: 98) that white feminists have started to become conscious of their ethnocentrism and to explore the links between feminism and racism.

Thus, gender, as well as race, is a social category. They are both hierarchical although the structure of their hierarchies broadly differ and are contingent, and yet 'they are intertwined' (Haslanger, 2000: 51). Accordingly, the relevance of the interrelation between gender and race, is crucial in enabling this study to attend to the analysis of the young participants from a feminist anti-racist stance, as Haslanger advocates. Thus, race, ethnicity, class, and gender can no longer be viewed independently, an insight that, when put into practice, provides the opportunity to situate this study, it is hoped, within the political arena it aims at, as we will see later in Chapter Four.

Finally, to complete the review of central terms in the race discussion we will need to explore racialisation.

2.1.4. Racialisation

The concept of racialisation has also been pivotal in the construction of race theory. Returning to Young's idea of difference through race, it is important to analyse the concept further. Young (1990: 140) refers to racialisation as the process whereby minority groups or individuals are subject to certain stereotypes and prejudices by institutions and the host population, which has an impact on employment, housing and education accessibility.

For Gilroy, the word racialisation is applied to the different forms race categories have taken in British political life (1987: 22) under a capitalist system. Two years later, Miles (1989: 76), defined it as:

‘a dialectical process by which meaning is attributed to particular biological features of human beings, as a result of which individuals may be assigned to a general category of persons which reproduces itself biologically … the process of racialization of human beings entails the racialization of the processes in which they participate and the structures and institutions that result’.

Miles’s Marxist definition reflects economic as well as biological elements, providing a significant term for explaining racial categorisation in British society.

Through a socio-cultural approach, Omi and Winant (1994: 55-56) understand race and racialisation as social constructions in a state of constant change along the historical process, when they claim racialisation is:

‘the socio-historical process, by which racial categories are created, inhabited, transformed and destroyed … Race is a matter of both social structure and cultural representation’.

To explain the roots of the ‘racialized outsider’ in Britain after the colonial period, Virdee (2014: 24) clarifies the case of the Irish Catholic, who undergoes a threefold oppression including political, religious and racial domination. She writes:

‘The term “racialized outsider” is employed to denote how this group’s prior experience of subjugation and racialization as a people at the hands of the British elite helped inform their relative lack of enthusiasm for, and commitment to, dominant politics and representations of the British nation once in Britain. After all, their nation was under the iron heel of the British state, they were castigated as Catholics and increasingly as members of an inferior Celtic race’.

Thus, Virdee’s explanation illuminating sufficiently what has been the process of racialisation for the Irish Catholic in Britain.

Finally, Meer (2014: 125) in his work ‘Race and Ethncity’ has claimed, ‘Racialisation is an analytical concept that explores the dynamics of race and racism’.

For Meer the term racialisation possesses a 'sensitive' character that goes beyond race, but which, being part of it, helps to expose the hurdle minorities have to confront through racial categories and which also, perhaps, even brings the possibility of being 'positively' racialised. As he continues to explain:

'This [racialisation] includes the social-historical processes through which people become members of racial groups. It is an addition to the concept of race in that it is more sensitive to explaining minority challenges to racial categories as well as how minorities can be cast in "positive" racial terms' (ibid.).

Thus, racial categories assigned to 'racial groups' may experience changes related to geography and during their negotiation through history. Geographical and historical moves will then shape the character of racism and its manifestations, as we will explore next.

2.2. Cultural Racism: The Expression of Xenophobia?

When we accept that race and racism are socially, historically, economically, and politically constructed, then it becomes arguable that racism is mutable: ergo non-static, dynamic. It follows that the understanding of racism has been epitomised by changeable manifestations throughout its history, as we saw before. Thus, such mutable feature has been connected with other social changes and vice versa (Warmington, 2012; Leonardo, 2005).

The mutable character of racism may also have resulted from shifts in the nature of social exclusion. From social race discrimination based on skin colour, it may have changed into bias and bigotry towards a different religion. In England, for example, bias towards black or Sikh communities during the 60s has shifted towards the religious bigotry expressed by Islamophobia (Richardson, 2004). As for Scotland, the historical persecution of Catholics, along with the following exclusion of the Irish in the past (see Jackson, 1987: 104), has shifted towards the more recent rejection of Eastern Europeans (Weishaar, 2008; Moskal,

2013) and lately, perhaps, of the Muslim population (see Hopkins, 2007a, 2007b; Scottish Government, 2011c). This does not imply that the previous forms of social exclusion have disappeared, but rather that the subsequent kind may have become more relevant in current British and Scottish social context.

To clarify further, Kovel's (1970) previously mentioned division of racism has been completed by Sue (2003), who argued that there are three coexisting forms of racism: individual, institutional and cultural racism. 'Individual' refers to the most familiar expressions of racial hatred and bigotry on the individual level. It can be an overt or subtle manifestation of hatred. An example of a subtle expression of this type of racism is given by Sue when he describes two elderly men, one black and one white, having their names called out differently, the black elderly man by his first name and the white by the more formal 'Mr Jones' (Sue, 2003: 33). Thus, skin colour, he argues, is the trigger in this form of racism.

In addition, Sue's understanding of institutional racism, agreeing with the Macpherson Report (1999), applies the term to: 'any institutional policy, practice, or structure in governments, business, unions, schools, churches, courts, and law enforcement entities' that will make decisions discriminating against non-white people and favouring the privileged group (ibid.). In this type of racism, again skin colour prevails as the main factor in racial discrimination and racial exclusion.

Finally, Sue's idea of cultural racism, which is confirmed by other scholars (see for example, Giraux and Laren, 1994; Modood, 2000; Bennet, 2004; Arshad, 2006; Fox et al., 2012), relates to the individual and institutional expression of cultural superiority of the mainstream group over minorities. It is revealed when the dominant group's language, traditions, beliefs and values are imposed through assimilative practices. For Sue 'White Euro-Americans use power to perpetuate their cultural heritage and impose it' on black and minority ethnic people, misrecognising and ignoring minorities' culture; for example, when 'some teachers forbid the use of a second language in their classrooms' (ibid.).

Cultural racism, this thesis argues, can also be expressed as xenophobia. Xenophobia being a generic expression of social exclusion and racial discrimination with fear of the other in the background, as we saw in Chapter One (p. 24). It is connected with the latest expressions of racism and racial discrimination emerging since WW II (see Burke, 2010). Thus, its generic sense allows the term to be related, for example, to the rejection and fear of the white 'other' such as Eastern European communities, in Scotland. It is well exemplified by forms of racial discrimination such as Sectarianism, Islamophobia and Antisemitism (see Richardson, 2001), and is seen when racialisation of the 'white other' is grounded on cultural or national difference, rather than on a supposed biological divergence. This concept understands that there is a hierarchy of power applied to language, religion and/or nationality, and connects in this work with the concept of 'white hierarchy' developed by Gaine (2006), to which we will give attention in a further section. Thus, following Kovel and Sue, biological and cultural racism in all their forms are both present as expressions of racism and xenophobia, which coexist in Scottish society, and acknowledgement of which is essential for the understanding of this thesis.

To this idea of expanding the biological approach to racism, Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1993: 130) have illuminated further arguing there are two types of racism: one stressing domination, with skin colour the main signifier and the slave trade the major expression from contemporary history; the other expressed through exclusion, which extends to culture and religion, beyond skin colour, and has its most extreme manifestations in the Holocaust or the genocide in Bosnia.

Nevertheless, this thesis agrees with Meer's (2014) claim that racism based on skin colour and visible difference needs to be regarded as the acutest axiom of racism and the one perpetuated and transcending others through history (see also Bell, 1993; Delgado and Stefancic, 2001, 2006), since colour and physical phenotypes cannot be hidden or woven in and out of a dominant white culture; whereas the 'white other', as has been historically the case for Irish or Eastern Europeans, for example, in Scotland, eventually has the opportunity to melt into the mainstream white society.

Thus, drawing from above we can conclude that the terms race, racism and racialisation are permeated with issues of power limiting access to the economy as a consequence of their historical construction from colonial times. As a consequence, the idea of race is socially constructed and transmitted across generations through the unequal distribution of power and economic opportunity. Accordingly, by exploring the average distribution of political power and money, we can comprehend who has been enjoying certain privileges by virtue of race in contemporary post-colonial societies in the West.

Drawing on all the above, we may be able to begin to partly understand the silences around racism and race productions in Scotland, and why attention to both has, perhaps, made such dilatory progress within the Scottish context, as we will see further on.

To disrupt the silences over racism and matters of race, this thesis has adopted the theoretical lenses through which to analyse the experiences of the young participants in this work, and which is briefly introduced below.

2.3. Critical Race Theory: A Radical Model in the Race Discussion

In order to help close this gap in the literature of race, a group of scholars have advanced a theoretical framework coming from the USA and progressively adapted it to the UK context. Gillborn (2006a, 2008), with the support of Ladson-Billings from the USA (1995, 1998, 2000) has incorporated a radical model for discussion within the British race discourse.

Drawing on the experiences of black people in the USA, the roots of Critical Race Theory (CRT hereafter) hail from critical legal theory of race in the country. It resulted from the need of black people to reclaim the ground for discussion of racial matters, moving it from

the periphery to the centre and from the sphere of experience to that of ideological discussion (Tate, 1997; Ladson-Billings, 2000).

When it emerged as a reaction to critical legal studies in the mid to late 1980s, Derrick Bell, one of its pioneers, used the momentum to support a paradigm that analysed and was committed to exploring colour-blindness and the intentionality of racial discrimination, instead of continuing to be distracted from looking into racial inequalities. Writers such as Gloria Ladson-Billings, Daniel Solórzano, Tara Yosso, Richard Delgado, Jean Stefancic, and Zeus Leonardo, among others working across the Atlantic, have been writing, researching and teaching about CRT, making explicit use of the term (Delgado and Stefancic, 2006).

CRT is seen as being in its infancy in the UK (Roberts et al., 2012) and is even less discussed within the field of education. As a new discipline, it arrived in response to the repeated failure of multicultural policies to address racial inequalities and the marginalisation of minority ethnic children in education in the UK (Housee, 2012; Gillborn, 2006a).

The deployment and understanding of CRT in Britain form a distinctive response to the dissimilar historical and structural circumstances of black people in the USA, with their different histories of citizenship and migration patterns (Gilroy, 1993), the different structures of race relations that they occupy, the distinctive composition of their minority groups (Sivanandan, 1989; Warmington, 2012), and the diverse, although related, approaches to multicultural politics and policies between the two countries (Anthias, 2002; Kelly, 2002; Yuval-Davis, 2006). This is something we will explore further when analysing the British context.

CRT, following anti-racist contributions from the past (for example Gilroy, 1987; Miles, 1989; Gillborn, 1995; Solomos, 2003), argues that issues of power, on grounds of race, are reproducing racial inequalities at all educational levels. It shows how this is happening

despite the celebration of cultural diversity and the rhetoric of social justice in education (Gillborn, 2008).

CRT's understanding of power relations draws on Critical Theory (CT) to intersect race, law and power and focus on the diverse ways black people have been traditionally discriminated against and marginalised as a group through unfair legislation favouring white people. The approach brings awareness of how power structures have contributed to the process of disenfranchising black people. Consequently, dismantling the undeserved privileges of 'whiteness' within US social structures has been a priority in the arena of social justice, which is where CRT is grounded.

Furthermore, CRT's acknowledgement of structural and institutional racism explains the permanence of racism in British and Scottish society, ingrained as it is in their political, social and economic spheres. Indeed, racism has been proved to manifest in such institutions in the UK and Scotland as the police (Kelly, 2000; Muir, 2013; *Herald Scotland*, 30.01.2014), education (Gillborn, 2008; Daily Record, 06.09.2013), and sports (Hylton, 2010; *Daily Record*, 09.03.2014). Thus, for CRT racism and race is seen as a natural feature in our societies and resulting on the power grounded on white supremacy or white privilege. Thus, the explicit verbalisation about racism and the dismantling of the undeserved privileges of 'whiteness', has allowed CRT as a theory placing race studies further within the arena of social justice.

To conclude, given that the majority of the population in Scotland is white, thus, it is pertinent and essential for this thesis to incorporate and explore the concept of 'white privilege' through whiteness studies, as we will see next.

2.4. Whiteness: a Hierarchy

Whiteness studies have focused on exploring historical, cultural and social features of white identities and how the social construction of whiteness operates. Thus, whiteness scholars (see for example Nakayama and Krizek, 1995; Kincheloe, 1999; Rodriguez, 2000; Ware and Back, 2002; Lipsitz, 2006, Leonardo, 2004, 2009, Agyeman, 2008) agree in seeking to confront 'white privilege' – in short, racism. They all share a leftist stance in politics that aims to contribute to a more humane society (Kolchin, 2002: 154). The idea of whiteness is linked with a social belief in the privileged status of white people in society and the question of how race privilege is distributed in contemporary societies. Thus, through postmodern and historicist influences, one of the key posits in whiteness studies is the dismantling of the historical construction privileging 'whites', who are historically placed in a superior social rank to that of 'non-whites'. The notion of 'white privilege' has been well explained by Leonardo's work (2004: 138) when he described it as:

'akin to walking down the street with money being put in your pant pocket without your knowledge. At the end of the day, we can imagine whites have generous purses without having worked for it'.

Leonardo's words help us understand two significant ideas surrounding white privilege: first, the undeserved character of such privilege, in that the advantages whites have over black and minorities are only due to their race; second, the unconsciousness of their undeserved privilege on the part of the majority of whites. Such blindness of whites does not make white people less responsible for the disadvantages of black and minority people (ibid.).

Following Leonardo's metaphor for white privilege, he also questions who is 'putting the money' into the white people's pockets, and concludes that 'racial minorities' are responsible. All the above, however, is the result of historical manoeuvres favouring the white race by empowering them throughout history. Thus,

‘the discourse on privilege comes with the unfortunate consequence of masking history, obfuscating agents of domination and removing the actions that make it clear who is doing what to whom’ (ibid.).

The other important aspect Leonardo touches on in this work is the sense of ‘guilt’ developed in white people when coming to terms with white privilege. Following McIntosh at the NAME workshop (National Association of Multicultural Education) in 2001, the account of white privilege is not aimed at blaming white people. On the contrary, stress needs to be placed on dismantling the way domination has been historically articulated and constructed in order to disguise an unfair social reality wherein the view of the white race as representative of the human race is assumed as a universal truth. Thus, white guilt is of no help either to whites or to black and minority (Leonardo, 2004: 140).

Leonardo concludes, drawing on Fanon (1967) and Freire (1996), that to develop strategies to counter the dominance and power of whiteness and avoid perpetuating white racial supremacy, it is crucial to listen to and learn from the experiences and stances of the oppressed. It is through the recognition of their experiences as exploited people that we white people can have an opportunity to see ourselves as oppressors. As McIntosh had noted before Leonardo:

‘I was taught to recognize racism only in individual acts of meanness by members of my group (white people), never in invisible systems conferring racial dominance on my group from birth’. (McIntosh, 2001: 81)

McIntosh reflects an important aspect of racism: whites reproduce their racial supremacy regardless of the best of intentions, because whiteness is invisible for white people. This last idea, the invisibility of whiteness and how whites unconsciously perpetuate racism, links with the discourse advanced by scholars discussing the silences in racism: an idea I will develop in a later section.

In addition, as we saw before, the understanding of whiteness is attached to the idea of a hierarchy in contemporary race discourse in Europe. Such a view challenges any assumption of homogeneity within the white status. Consequently, the acknowledgement of dissimilarity within whiteness enables what Garner (2007: 257) calls 'a more fluid picture of situational micro-level power relations to emerge'. Garner, addressing the recent flows of immigration in Europe, and following Sniderman et al. (2000), believes that Others can also be white 'or even members of the same nation' (2007: 258). He argues that 'racialization in the early 21st century is not fixed by a black-white binary any more than it was in the 16th century' (ibid.). At this moment, as mentioned, culture needs to be considered in the processes of racialisation. As an example, Garner argues the case of Jewish and Irish people, Eastern Europeans in the UK, or, perhaps, more recently in 'the Refugee Crisis' in Europe,(see *The Guardian,* 26 .09. 2015; *BBC News,* 28 01. 2016).

To explore the presence of hierarchy within whiteness, Garner analyses its boundaries through the history of the USA colonialism mainly in the 19th and 20th centuries: how the first settlers were already establishing distinctions between white Protestants and Irish Catholics in terms of privileges. He argues that the Catholic Irish are 'a microcosm of these processes' of hierarchy (2007: 260), and sees them as occupying an intermediate rank between white Protestantism and blackness in urban contexts in the USA. In this process of racialisation and acquisition of privileges, the Irish population became well aware that embracing whiteness was a social value which would empower them with further privileges. According to Garner, in this process of whiteness for the Irish Catholics, they turned against free blacks, instead supporting slavery, against indigenous Americans in the Indian wars, and against Mexicans in the Mexican wars (ibid.).

During the middle of the twentieth century, 'notions of an Anglo-Saxon supremacy began to be accepted and supported by some scholars such as Knox and Gobineau' (ibid.). They argued that 'within the white "race", Anglo-Saxons were particularly capable of civilization in comparison to Celts, Slavs and Latins' (ibid.). Thus, Europeans arriving in the USA found that whiteness was simultaneously a 'centrifugal and centripetal force' for gaining privileges, which translated into access to resources as well as psychological and social capital (ibid.). Consequently, every social group arriving in the States became involved in

a struggle against every other in order to prove that they were whiter (ibid.). Garner's claim illustrates how 'other whites', pitted against 'the other non-white', have the opportunity to weave in and out of the dominant white society.

Given the above, Garner argues, the best way to understand whiteness is by viewing it as a 'contingent social hierarchy' (2007b: 264). This implies that such a hierarchy will grant different and unequal access to cultural and economic capital, and that this in turn will converge or intersect with gender, ethnicity, class and sexuality (ibid.). Thus, there was discussion about which ethnic groups can be considered 'white' or less or more 'white', according to the notion of a hierarchy of whiteness. As an example, through the hierarchy of whiteness, a white Spanish person, through the process of racialisation, will be socially regarded as less white than a white Scot. This idea will be helpful when analysing some of the young people in this study.

In consequence, Garner's concept of white hierarchy can be utilised to explain the processes of exclusion of white minorities in a predominantly white country such as Scotland. It is also relevant to this study, when applied to the white minority ethnic groups living in rural Scotland. This process affects not only the people migrating from the A8 countries, as the latest and broadest white minority ethnic group at the moment, but also any other minorities arriving from places in Europe where English is not the first language. Hence, lack of English needs to be contemplated as a potential reason for social exclusion and racial discrimination, although a reason plausibly disappearing within a first or second generation.

White hierarchy, thus, operates to reveal what could be the experiences of any minority people. This recognition enables the development of policies and measures for tackling racism and racial discrimination, for example, against the Polish community or any white non-British individual or group which is racialised in Britain as 'other white': other, that is, than British or Scottish (see for example Dawney, 2008; Fox et al., 2012), a pattern thus extended to Scotland.

Here it is relevant to mention the distinctive feature of whiteness in Scotland, where only four per cent of the population consists of minorities. This fact is revealed by the latest Scottish Census, which reports 96% of the people as white British, with a significant majority, 62%, described as 'Scottish only'. Thus, this thesis argues, the encounter with difference, that is, non-white and/or non-Scottish people, is limited and sometimes absent, in this part of the country (Scottish Government, 2016).

Additionally, among the non-white group, the largest community is a product of the empire and the colonial period, as explored in the following section. Among the visible minorities, the Asian community is the broadest group, comprising nearly three per cent of all the minority people living in Scotland. Those of African origin represent only 0.6 per cent, followed by mixed and multiple ethnic groups such as Eastern Europeans, who form 0.4 per cent of the total minority population.

In relation to white hierarchy and invisible minorities, Irish people have been historically deemed an inferior Celtic group when associated with the Catholic Church. Thus, Catholics are a minority religious group as against a majority of Protestants in Scotland. The hierarchical rank of the Irish group is followed by a lower rank of Eastern Europeans, leaving Polish people as the next largest Catholic group to have settled in the country. Thus, a language different to English is the primary signifier for exclusion of these invisible minority communities.

Finally, Angelina Castaño in her work '"I Don't Want to Hear That!"– Legitimating Whiteness through Silence in Schools' (2008) explains how whiteness is legitimated when race is silenced in schools, and how this process of legitimation of whiteness will have varied consequences for students not only in racially diverse schools but also in those with a predominantly white setting. Castaño's work affirms the significant role that silences have in this rural study: how silences and the unawareness of white privilege, perhaps, are responsible for regenerating and perpetuating racism in the classroom, as we will explore next.

2.5. Silences in Racism

When discussing racialisation, Gillborn explains how the popular understanding of a racially hierarchical categorisation connects both terms: race and racism. He writes: 'racism has often been viewed as involving two key characteristics: a belief in the existence of discrete human races and the idea that those "races" are hierarchically ordered'. He further explains the difficulties in verbalising the concept of racism, arguing: 'Racism is a highly contested term … to be labelled a "racist" is generally a highly derogatory slur' (Gillborn, 2008: 3).

Thus, underpinning the above with the works of Trepagnier (2008), Castaño (2008), and Ryan-Flood and Gill (2010), we find that silences in racism are the norm. Trepagnier and Castaño, argue in separate works, when exploring silences in racism, they perceive silent racism involves not only speech, but also the thoughts, images and assumptions carried in the minds of white people. Castaño found in her research with whites, including white teachers, that race talk made them uncomfortable and that either it was silenced when it took place, or that there was a general silence about it, and that in this way whiteness was legitimated. This process is what she called 'colormuteness'. For Castaño (2008: 318), 'colourmuteness' only brings advantages for white students as against the experiences of black and minority peers.

This is also reflected in the 'Logic of Colourblindness' (ibid.). Within 'colourblind logic' (see Beck, 1992; Frankenberg, 1993; Bonilla-Silva, 2001, 2004), based on neoliberal stances, it is argued that because success is attainable by anyone, failure is the fault of the individual and not of the social system. Indeed, colourblind ideology allows those defending it, using a discourse of 'equality and meritocracy', to claim innocence, and even to display anti-racism, whereas in reality they are simply justifying the racial inequality of the status quo (Bonilla-Silva, 2003; Pollock, 2004, 2008; López, 2006).

According to Frankenberg's discussion of the 'racial ideology of evasiveness', the terms 'colourblind' and 'colourmute' wrongly imply a passive and fair system (Castaño, 2008:

318). Indeed, on the contrary, there is no innocence in the way the educational system privileges some racial groups over others (see Gillborn, 2008), as we will see in a subsequent section.

In addition, Ferguson's 'Silence: a Politics' (2003) has been of special relevance in this thesis. He understands silences in a dual manner: first, as a form of oppression, and second, as a response of resistance and/or resilience by the oppressed, whereby the victims can gain some power against the oppressors. Thus we can understand Ferguson's idea as recognising the adaptability of survival, illuminating the process through which, utilising a certain resilience, the young person positions her/himself around the experience of racism or race issues. Or in the case of resistance, which is rarer in young people, as we will see, the response represents the capacity to confront the mainstream group, as mentioned by Young (1990).

For Freire (1968), as a result of economic, political and social domination by the capitalist system, the oppressors, those in power, impose a 'culture of silence' (ibid.: 15) on the oppressed, the poor and marginalised. The intention of those silences is to lead the oppressed to conformity and to preserve the privileges of the oppressors. Freire (ibid.: 67) suggests that this dynamic of oppression can be disrupted through 'a pedagogy of liberation', providing the marginalised and oppressed with enough literacy, by means of an empowering education, to break the silences imposed on them. As Freire insisted, every human, no matter how 'ignorant' or 'submerged', and despite living in 'the culture of silence', may be capable of looking critically at the world in a conveniently appropriate dialogical and 'liberated' context (ibid.).

Ladson-Billings (2009), through her experience as a black teacher of both white and coloured students in the USA, understands that the experience of silences is clearly not the same for white people and people of colour, as they are always connected with power. Teachers have to be aware, following Freire's (1968) discourse, of the power they emanate to their students. This is crucial for elucidating and enabling race discussion and tackling the silences in rural education, as this thesis argues.

To conclude, the incorporation of whiteness in the idea of white privilege and white hierarchy, together with the 'culture of silences' imposed on the subjects of racism and race productions, close this overview of the body of literature that explores essential elements in current race theory which are critical for this thesis.

Finally, to fully complete this voyage through literature, the above will help us, perhaps, to understand better the nature of race relations in Britain, as extended to Scotland along with her own process of racialisation. It shows how whiteness and silences have probably played a significant role in the anti-racist struggle in this part of the world, as we will explore in what follows.

2.6. The UK: Race and Empire

Britain has built her own discourse around race, adapted to her cultural and historical peculiarities. Within this narrative, it will plausibly be relevant to look at the more than three hundred years of colonial empire maintained by the country, with a few remaining settlements found, and a strong influence all across the planet (see Schneider, 2007). Thus, the section will consider the narrative after colonial times and the significant impact on current race relations, focusing on experiences in the South of the country.

The early literature on race, comprising post-war and anti-colonial writings, emphasised the backlash of the white British population against the increasing numbers of people arriving from the ex-colonies, and the way the black and minority newcomers struggled with their new lives in the UK (Banton, 1967, 1973; 1982a; Ethnic Minorities and Community Relations, 1982). The main stress was on colour and numbers, both being the principal 'visible' elements at the time. That was the period when England felt particularly threatened by the numbers of Commonwealth immigrants arriving in the country, an increase which was viewed as a menace to the uniformity of whiteness in social and political contexts. As Solomos (2003: 52) explained:

‘Throughout the period an increasingly racialised debate on immigration took place, focusing on the supposed social problems of having too many black immigrants and the question of how they could be stopped from entering’.

At the time, racism and matters of race were seen through limited homogeneous lenses in the country: all newcomers were viewed as ‘black’. It did not matter whether they were of Caribbean or Asian origin, they were all contextualised in the same way (Gilroy, 2002; Virdee, 2014). Such rejection of colour was in contrast to the comparative tolerance shown to European workers arriving at the same period (Miles, 2003).

In that fear of numbers, the media played a significant role by fuelling the feelings of threat among the white British population, especially when engaging in the ‘figures game’, magnifying the numbers and dramatising the consequences. Thus, the press was highly responsible for creating and exaggerating stereotypes and bigotry against the newly-arrived minorities and, simultaneously, for contributing to the processes of racialisation, or categorisation (Sivanandan, 1982; Miles, 1989: 76; Banton, 2001) of the black community, as we saw.

As a consequence, initial race-relations studies mainly focused on inter-ethnic relations. Any issues of personal, cultural or institutional biases on the part of the English population, or the impact of scarce life opportunities for the newcomers, were not even considered, displaced by the overwhelming fear of increased diversity in the UK (Mac an Ghaill, 1999).

A gradual shift towards more modern thinking began to take shape under the influence of the civil rights movement in the US and through the increasing organisation of black communities in the UK (Solomos and Back, 1996; Sivanandan, 1982). The change in views provided gradual awareness of racial disadvantages in important areas such as housing, labour, health, and schooling. This brought a progressive tendency into cultural perspectives on race matters, and an attempt to secure some social justice for the minority communities. In 1965 the first Race Relations Act (RRA) was launched. Culturalist scholars (see for example Hebdige, 1979; Gilroy, 1993; Stuart Hall, 1996; Du Gay, 1996;

McRobbie, 2005) explored minority communities on the theory that their social behaviour was to be understood mainly in terms of culture. Their main concern was with issues of assimilation or integration faced by the 'second' generation of minorities. This was when the term 'ethnicity' became widespread, partly to counteract the contested meaning of race and partly because ethnicity had been assigned a wider social scope than the term race, being considered a less politicised, ergo more neutral and more convenient concept, in white British society. As proof of its convenience at present, it is the preferred term in official forums in the country, and also overlaps with the term 'race' in some recent race discourses (see de Lima, 2008).

Culturalist stances have attracted broad criticism from later critical and materialist theorists on grounds of their simplicity in the analysis of black and minority communities, and associated neglect of these communities' disadvantages and struggles within the mainstream population. Nevertheless, as Mac an Ghaill (1999: 6) has stated, culturalist views have been 'particularly important in helping to develop multicultural policies. The legacy of this perspective is still to be found in different parts of the country…' Thus, they persist in our own time.

Against culturalism, Weberians and Marxists presented an alternative view of race-relations from a materialist perspective, as we discussed earlier. The political relevance of Marxists and Weberians in the emergence of contemporary anti-racist theories is undeniable, and marked the time when black and minority communities began to have a voice in the UK. The same is true of culturalism, both of which stances abide today.

The publication of 'The Empire Strikes Back' by the Centre for Contemporary Culture Studies (CCCS) in 1982 contributed different lenses which rejected the earlier presumption of homogeneity of minority groups, giving way to an acknowledgement of their diverse identities. From here on, race relation studies focused on the 'black' identity or the 'anti-racist' struggle.

Finally, the works of Gilroy developed race-related matters a step further. Through 'The Black Atlantic' (1993) he has contributed to the understanding of the lives of the black community, showing what the black struggle has consisted of and how diverse black

people's experiences of social practices and inequalities have emerged from it. Thus, Gilroy, as we saw, has asserted the convergence of race and class. Even more, his politics of identity have occupied the core of the race discourse and opened the door to the ideas of fragmentation and hybridity, which were defended in later postmodern stances.

To close and draw conclusions from the discussion of race relations, it is necessary to focus on the particular experience of Scotland in regard to race, a subject we will unpack next.

2.7. Scotland and Race: Racism Here?

Like England, Scotland has developed her own specificities around issues of race and racism. With reference to Gaine (2000), this part of the country might reflect the unbalanced distribution of multicultural Britain. Running parallel to that circumstance, there might also be an uneven and slow response to race matters and racism (see Dunlop and Miles, 1990; Kelly, 2003; Arshad et al., 2005; de Lima, 2006).

The low numbers of black and minority people coming to live here in the past might have determined one of the main differences within a multicultural society (Dunlop, 1995) – a reality that might be changing after the latest shifts in migration trends since the beginning of this century (see 2011 Census).

Overall, reactions to racism and race productions have been limited or almost non-existent pre-devolution in Scotland (Powney, 1998). This could be partly explained by the aforementioned small size of its minority ethnic community, in view of the need to create a critical mass to challenge any possible racist issues within Scotland.

There are, however, further reasons for the procrastination on race issues in Scotland. One could be the essential role of national identity in the country, so that Scottish nationalism

might have been responsible for displacing concern with race matters. To understand how nationalism operates is, therefore, useful for this study.

Following some authors exploring the country (see Bond and Rosie, 2002; Reicher et al., 2010; Bechhofer and McCrone, 2010: 6) Scottish nationalism seems to have been nurtured on the 'logic of identity' we discussed by Young (1990), which may explain how Scottish people identify themselves through their culture, traditions and distinctive institutions in the country. Yet, Scottish nationalism does not imply an objective description of what Scotland is in reality.

According to the discussion in Bechhofer and McCrone's paper, two key ideas within nationalism affect the discourse of race in Scotland. One is the concept of oppression by England, with a residual sense of being conquered by the South. The other is the social assumption that Scotland is an egalitarian country with 'a strong, fair and inclusive national identity' (Reicher et al., 2010).

The national identity-based assumption of being an inclusive country might have collided with the psychological and subjective sense of 'who we are' and 'what we value'. Scottish people's subjective position in the world may affect who they consider 'one of them', i.e. who is a Scot? Accordingly, the collision of these two ideas: 'who we are' and 'what we value' might be impacting the experiences of the minority communities living in Scotland (ibid.).

Thus, the concept of Scottishness held by the local population: 'an egalitarian and inclusive nation', may have been accompanied by the assumption that Scotland cannot be racist. The scarce documentation on the issue of racism and xenophobia, however, has proved the contrary. The presence of sectarianism (Kelly, 2003), Anglophobia and Islamophobia (Hussain and Miller, 2005; *Herald Scotland*, 23.10. 2015) is still a reality in the country, standing as witness to xenophobia and racism. In addition, the murders of Surit Singh Chhokar in 1998, Firsat Yildiz in 2001, Simon San in 2010 (*Herald Scotland*, August 2011; *The Scotsman*, 19.01.2015) and the latest death in police custody of Sheku Bayoh (*The Guardian*, 14 May 2015; *Herald Scotland*, 13.02.2016), all black minorities, are plausibly cases with race hate or racism at the core.

The above cases reveal that racism is a reality in Scotland as it is in the rest of the UK (Hopkins, 2008; Mooney and Poole, 2004; Arshad, 2002: 217), yet acceptance of this fact by the white Scottish majority population living in the country, as we saw before, is still pending. Such acceptance is necessary if some progress is to be achieved in tackling race hate and race productions in Scotland.

Simultaneously, the scarce research around racism, mainly conducted in urban areas, has disclosed that many young people of black and minority ethnic origin identify themselves as hyphenated nationalities in Scotland. They can see themselves as being Black-Scottish, Scottish-Pakistani, Scottish-Bangladeshi or even Muslim-Scottish (de Lima, 2009; Emejulu, 2011). This phenomenon may suggest that not all minority ethnic young people in Scotland feel rejected or discriminated against. But neither should we disregard here, given the denial of racism in the country, the possible explanation that these young people have adopted or assimilated a Scottish identity to feel better accepted and included by their white Scottish peers.

Unsurprisingly, given the above, what is certain is that there is a dearth of research on race matters and racism in Scotland (Hopkins, 2004), and that it has been patchy, limited and largely under-theorised (Arshad, 2003). As we have seen, when discussing difference and ethnicity, the primary focus has been on areas of national identity and largely in terms of the England/Scotland paradigm (for example, Kiely et al., 2005). Race in terms of colour, culture, and religion has been much less studied, as it may be an area that does not attract funding (Arshad et al., 2005). The fact that Scotland aims to be, and regards herself as, an inclusive egalitarian country mentioned by Reicher et al (2010), together with being immersed in a desire for independence, explains, perhaps, the impact of progress in the process of racialisation in this part of the country. How, therefore, has racialisation played out in the Scottish context? This is something we will explore next.

2.7.1. Racialisation in Scotland

Hopkins (2008: 113,114) argues that there has been both continuity and a discontinuity between Scottish and English circumstances in relation to experiences of racism and race

productions with a special impact on the black and minority ethnic population. The continuity is grounded on the forms in which race and racism have been pervasive across Scottish society and link with the experiences of race and racism in England to the south. The discontinuity marked by the different volume and diversity of the minority community as mentioned before.

The first minority ethnic group to be racialised in Scotland were the Irish white people fleeing from the potato famine in the 19th century (Miles and Dunlop, 1987: 125). Their racialisation was grounded on their Catholic religion, historically rejected by Protestants in Scotland since the 16th century. In the process of 'racializing the Outsider' (Virdee, 2014), the Irish Catholic community in Scotland, when racialised, or racially categorised, Sectarianism remained as a pervasive issue in the country up to our own day (see Kelly, 2003; Bruce et al., 2005).

To a far lesser extent, Jewish people underwent their own process of racialisation and thus of exclusion in Scotland. Antisemitism (Meer, 2014: 8,9) is not only viewed as a religious issue but is also grounded on an imaginary and historical perception of the Jews as a community to be rejected. Over this issue, Arendt (1968: xiv) explained that the upper classes in Europe had anti-Jewish feelings throughout the 19th century, which were abandoned with only a few exceptions, that is, as 'the prerogative of crackpots in general and the lunatic fringe in particular'.

The discussion of racialisation moved on from the Irish community to another stage with the arrival of white migrants from the A8 countries (Scottish Government, 2009). In more recent years the Muslim population has arguably been leading to a recent form of 'racialised other' or racialised enemy, as the fear of Muslims generates a 'dislike or hatred of Muslim individuals or groups': that is, Islamophobia (Hussain and Miller, 2006: 69; *Herald Scotland*, 13.12.2015). Thus, the fear of Muslims, combined with the immigration from A8 countries and the potential impact of the flows of young people fleeing from the labour crisis in South European countries such as Spain (*BBC News*, 13.03.2015; *Cosmopolita Scotland*, May 2015), and now possibly with the arrival of Syrian refugees (*The Guardian*,

December 2015; *The Guardian,* 16.02.2016), is opening an arena for new discussions of racialisation in the country, and setting the context for this study.

However, in discussing racialisation in Scotland, it is important, as Meer suggests (2015: 2228), not to 'bleach' historical and indeed contemporary narratives about racism. The colour issue remains as an important element in the narrative of racialisation, and of how racism operates in a systemic way in the West; that is, in the North of Europe and the USA (Feagin, 2013, 2014) as we have discussed before.

To conclude, for Miles, racialisation has not really taken place in Scotland, other than for Irish communities: this absence, perhaps, implying the extended view that Scotland 'has a good race relations because there is no racism here' (Miles, 1986: 108), we have encountered before. Yet, agreeing with Miles, this widespread view of the denial of racism needs to be seriously disputed. So when the current government, the SNP (Scottish National Party), believes it is attempting to deliver progressive policies for minority communities, this thesis argues that the discussion of race and racism in the country needs updating. If Scotland truly wants to be involved in an avant-garde, egalitarian society where everybody really matters, something needs to change in current race discourses, at least in rural areas, as this study will demonstrate.

To look further into how Scotland has attended to racism and matters of race, we need to examine how the Scottish educational system has responded to black and minority young people pre- and post-Devolution, as we will see.

2.7.2. Racism and Education in Scotland: Response to minority ethnic Pupils pre- and post-Devolution

Following the changing trends in the Scottish population outlined in Chapter One, 82,786[2] black and minority ethnic pupils became part of the Scottish educational system during

[2] These figures include White-Other British.

2011 (Scottish Government, 2011b). This is estimated to be 14.09% of the total number of pupils attending schools in the country. Of these, 24,555 pupils, or 29.6% of all pupils of minority ethnic origin, have been identified as having English as an additional language (Arshad, 2012). These figures reflect the increasing diversity in the makeup of the educational community in Scotland at present.

How has the Scottish educational system approached black and minority young people? Prior to Devolution, the main approach during the 1970s was assimilationist (Cummins, 2001). Thus, for bilingual young people the stress was on learning the English language as a priority, with the intention of helping these pupils 'catch up' with their local peers. Their culture and language were ignored to such an extent that parents have been told by teachers, on many occasions, to avoid speaking their mother tongue at home (Arshad, 2008: 805).

Under the influence of cultural stances, around the 1980s there was a gradual shift to multicultural practices. The main approach centred on celebrating diversity through various cultural events, revealing a first attempt to move away from previous common 'colour-blindness'. Any form of racism or racial discrimination, whether individual or institutional, is still not considered.

MCARE (Multicultural and Anti-Racist) stances found a place in the country after the Swann Report was published in 1985, although Arshad (2003: 909) regards it as having had limited impact in Scotland. Backed up by this document, there is finally some recognition of the importance of addressing and tackling racism in schools, whether displayed by pupils, teachers or any member of the staff. Such acknowledgement, however, coexists 'with a lack of general consensus' in schools on how to deal with racist incidents (ibid.).

Overall, schools' responses to black and minority pupils tend to be deficient, with many teachers afraid of using the wrong terminology or abstaining from addressing differences among their minority ethnic pupils. Words such as 'racism' or 'racist' tend to be avoided in favour of soft ones like 'diversity or inclusion' (Arshad, 2003: 915).

As an example of the above deficit in responses, and in relation to the Highlands where the fieldwork of this thesis was conducted, there is an absence of quantitative evidence about the schooling outcomes of black and minority ethnic young people (Arshad et al., 2005; Netto, 2011).

The current discourse around minority pupils in education, therefore, is controversial and problematic in Scotland. There is a debate among those in the educational community who choose a multicultural pose, those who prefer an anti-racist view, and those who use a combination of both. And that entire dispute takes place in a context in which some schools might still be immersed in assimilationist practices (Arshad, 2008: 805), as was the case with the school examined in the study in the Highland (Cacho, 2010, unpublished).

In view of the above, although research on race and racism in education has been scarce, the few existing studies has proved attention to black and minority students' needs runs unequally within Scotland, as will be unfolded next.

2.7.3. Research around Racism in Scottish Education

As early as 2001, Netto et al., in their 'Audit of Research on Minority Ethnic Issues in Scotland', showed that many of the Scottish government's good intentions for race equality to become real in the country may have remained just that: mere intentions. Indeed, the reality of racism and racial discrimination seemed to be common in different areas of Scottish social provision and life. The study highlighted the 'virtual invisibility' of race, racism and ethnicity in the ethos of schools, and the need for a national policy to address race and racism issues, among other recommendations. Their audit was based on a previous report conducted by Powney et al. in 1998, a work that had already brought to light deficient practices in the Scottish educational system in relation to race matters.

Graham and Hill (2003: 8), in a study published through the SCRE (Scottish Centre for Research in Education) in Glasgow analsying the transition to secondary school, found that

children from a minority ethnic background were the ones more likely to experience 'difficulties and disappointment' when making this transition. They pointed out the need to continue tackling 'instances of discrimination and racist bullying' in their recommendations to the local authorities.

Caulfield et al. (2005) made another essential contribution concerning the key role of teachers in tackling racist incidents in schools. Their study was conducted among secondary pupils who often described their teachers as ineffective in dealing with racist issues. They remarked on the inefficient and 'blind' response of teachers to racist incidents at secondary schools. It also revealed that racist incidents were more likely to occur in secondary schools than in primary schools. Ross and Hill (2006) backed Caulfield et al. findings a year later and Hill et al. (2007) contributed showing that peer racism is endemic and more frequent in secondary schools, but is less often reported than for primary schools.

In addition, 'Minority Ethnic Pupils' Experiences in Scottish Schools' (MEPESS) has probably been the broadest study of race and racism in education in Scotland. This work, connecting with previous findings, has analysed race and racism issues through the voices of minority ethnic parents, teachers and minority ethnic pupils. MEPESS has also contributed by placing race and racism on the education agenda, bringing the opportunity for opening discussion about race, racism and anti-racism within the educational context in Scotland after the publishing (Arshad et al., 2005).

Perhaps, through these publications, the self-indulgent self-image of egalitarianism whereby 'everybody matters' in Scottish society might have been, at least, questioned. But it would also be fair to admit that the Scottish government, having won the new parliament, has intended to introduce amendments to redress old mistakes. It is undeniable that there has been an intention to achieve equality through legislation, as shown by the Scottish Executive's creation of the Race Equality Advisory Forum (REAF) to provide recommendations to schools for addressing matters of institutional racism (Netto et al., 2001: 37).

As an example, the publication of 'Count Us In' by HMI (Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education) in September 2009 took place only after the EAL teachers' services had been

asking for help from local authorities since 2005. It resulted from the unprecedented flow into education of minority ethnic children and young people for whom English was not their first language, mentioned at the beginning of this section, and affecting particularly the Scottish Highland (Wishart, 2005).

The intention of 'Count Us In' was to provide support for teachers and schools working with the newly arrived minority pupils, thus, encouraging schools to share good practices. The document made some general recommendations and recognised that many EAL teachers had been struggling with scarce or no resources to deal with the large numbers of children and young people for whom English was not their first language.

Yet, the document lacks acknowledging racism or any racist issues potentially impacting the new minority pupils' experiences, or indicating how to help teachers dealing with these issues. Thus, it fails to promote an anti-racist framework.

Indeed, for Caulfield et al. (2005), school policies on bullying and anti-racist matters have been 'patchy' across the thirty-two local authorities in Scotland, thus, responses to racist incidents, if any, differ from one school to another. This suggests that it is essential to create an educational policy that unifies criteria so as to ensure that every member of the education system in Scotland assumes the role of helping to develop an empathic, supportive bond with his or her pupils and students (Arshad, 2008a).

Finally, narrowing the field to research in rural contexts in education, the dearth of research is persistent in Scotland as mentioned. In fact, it is common, for reasons of funding, that most research is conducted in urban settlements (de Lima, 2008; Netto, 2011).

Thus, drawing on previous research in education, it seems most local authorities and schools in Scotland are engaged in 'ad hoc' practices. Unsurprisingly, literature and research around race in education in Scotland suggest that racism and race productions need to be talked through and discussed widely in educational communities to counteract, what I argue in this thesis, are 'big walls of silence' around racism in the country.

To conclude, as Arshad has mentioned (2008), the role of education and teachers is significant for addressing and tackling racism at schools and educational institutions. Thus, we will look into how education may have an opportunity to achieve this in Scotland.

2.7.4. The Role of Education in Tackling Racism in Scotland

As we saw, race discussion in Scotland seems mainly to focus on the celebration of multiculturalism and on the increasing use of the word 'inclusion' at present. Perhaps, the latter perceived as a safe or 'sanitised' (Arshad, 2014) term and the one preferred by heads of schools, practitioners and teachers when interacting with their black and minority ethnic pupils, as against more explicit words such as 'racism', 'racist' or 'anti-racism', which are preferred by CRT.

In addition, the gradual and slow shift towards the use of the terms race and racism, which was welcome news – especially following legislation introduced by the Race Relations Amendment in 2003: 'ensuring that Scotland's Public Bodies are meeting their commitments to eliminating racial discrimination, ensuring equal opportunities and promoting good race relations' (Scottish Government, 2003: 2, The Scotsman, 25.05.2012) – has recently slowed down and even come to a halt. When the national discourse, as mentioned, has displaced racism and matters of race having political priority the discussion of the latest independence (Hopkins, 2008), in this part of the country.

Thus, to create a place for race issues within the Scottish educational, political and social context, the Centre for Education for Racial Equality in Scotland (CERES) has been launched at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Its main aim is to address and tackle any social discrimination and marginalisation in matters of race, racism and ethnicity, encompassing this association and its related practices within the sphere of social justice. CERES's principal endeavour is to bring about and ensure awareness of the key role education has in dismantling race inequalities, stereotypes and bias in the Scottish population.

CERES (2016) is in a constant process of change and although it does not currently make explicit mention of CRT, their targets coincide: making explicit use of the terms race and racism. It promotes tackling the silences around racism in the country, challenging the formula of common multicultural celebrations or questioning, perhaps, vague discourses around inclusion.

Overall, this thesis argues, the discussion about racism and race implies promoting further 'racial literacy' in Scotland. This consisting, perhaps, on creating spaces for white children and young people to discuss and problematise the role of whiteness through gradually deconstructing the racial inequalities generated from the colonial period. Thus, as Rogers and Mosley (2006: 13) suggest: 'to step into texts to identify, problematize and most importantly, reconstruct whiteness in relation to social justice' (Rogers and Mosley, 2006: 13).

To complete this Chapter I will traverse next how race literacy has been gradually built up through relevant race policy in Britain.

2.8. Race Policies in the UK: from the Macpherson Report to the Equality Act 2010

Following Stephen Lawrence's murder in 1993 and the dubious modus operandi of the police to solve the crime, the Macpherson Report (1999) defined the term institutional racism as:

'The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting

prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness, and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people'.

Sivanandan et al. (2000) further explained how institutional racism, operating 'covertly or overtly, resides in the policies, procedures, operations and culture of public or private institutions – reinforcing individual prejudices and being reinforced by them in turn' (see also *The Guardian*, 24.02.1999). His words reminding us of the structural and endemic persistence of racism in British society.

After the report was launched, contemporary politicians made enthusiastic speeches asserting the need for race awareness among the population and advocating further advances in race equality in the country. Jack Straw, the Home Secretary at the time stated on the publication of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry in February 1999:

'The (Macpherson) report does not place a responsibility on someone else; it places a responsibility on each of us. We must make racial equality a reality. The vision is clear: we must create a society in which every individual, regardless of colour, creed or race, has the same opportunities and respect as his or her neighbour'. (Gillborn, 2000: 5)

Despite the initial positive public response, anti-racist scholars (Anthias, 1999; Gillborn and Mirza, 2000; Rollock, 2009; Phillips, 2011) have questioned the effectiveness of the report in achieving substantial progress on race equality in the country. Indeed, Anthias has argued that, although the report raised awareness of institutional racism, the document lacks acknowledgement of how racism triggered the fiasco of the police investigation. (Anthias, 1999: 2).

Recommendation twelve of the same report highlights the understanding how racism can operate in covert and harmful forms for the victims. This idea of subtle forms of racism and racial discrimination, or racial microaggressions will be relevant in this work, as we will see later.

Furthermore, the Macpherson Report has stated that a racist case should be defined as 'any incident which is perceived racist by the victim or any other person' (Kelly, 2000: 14).

Such recognition of the black minority population's views concerning their racist experiences has furthered assisted victims of racism, thus, perhaps, widening the scope of the concept and facilitating, hopefully, addressing and tackling racism within an institutional support.

From the Macpherson Report (1999) to the Equality Act (2010), the discourse of race and racism has gradually broadened in the UK. The later Equality Act (2010), after gathering together previous legislation on race relations from 2002, 2004 and 2006, has established a code of practice for all public bodies, now held accountable for protecting any individual against discrimination by reason of race, ethnicity or belief. Through the code established for schools, the educational institutions and practitioners are encouraged to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, to advance equality of opportunities, and to foster good relations between peers. Such practices are not restricted to education, but to be applied to institutions in any part of the public sector – be it education, health, housing, police or employment (Equality Act, 2010).

Drawing on the above, we can see how race policies have been gradually growing giving slowly voice to the black and minority communities from ex-colonies and from later migration flows. This history of race relations will contrast with the scenario in the Highlands, as will be shown next.

2.8.1. Race Equality Policies in the Highlands

The Highland Council has launched several race equality documents since the beginning of the century. The groups targeted have been minority ethnic communities in general, including migrant workers, Gypsies/Travellers and Scottish Refugees. The main documents have appeared in 2004, 2008, 2013 and more recently in 2015 (Equality Plan: A Fairer Highland). The aim of the policies has been to gradually incorporate changes to enhance minority communities' experiences in the area. Some recommendations emerging from the policies have been:

- improve community cohesion across/within all rural communities in the Highlands

- reduce race inequalities
- enhance access to services for all minority communities
- develop further services for minorities
- advance infrastructures to tackle race inequalities and disadvantage in rural areas.

Whilst the previous Race Equality Scheme (Highland Council, November 2008: 5, 8) acknowledged experiences of racism and harassment among young people, stating: 'Young people (aged 16-25) were more likely than average to think the level of racism or racial discrimination had increased (47%)', most recent Equality Plans (2013 and 2015) omit the word 'racism'. Instead, the current document applies the idea of 'inclusion' within a fairer Highland, when it promotes: 'a fairer, inclusive Highland where everyone can feel part of the Highland community', adding that 'People are, and feel, free to live their lives without harassment and discrimination' (Highland Council, 2013: 10).

The Highland Council (2013: 11; 2015) has acknowledged the aim of attending to 'different needs' and the assurance of services and information to be delivered and made accessible to all the population in the Highlands. The 'attendance of diverse needs' expressed probably applies also to the black and minority community. Yet, latest two documents have avoided mentioning the word 'racism' at all. Thus, pondering here if there seems to be a regression, perhaps a vacuum, over using an anti-racism framework in the Highlands, or maybe not. What could be the reason of such silences, if any, over the term and the potential impact on race relations for the minority young people in the area? Thus, to allow further exploration of racism and race issues in the Highlands, we will attend to the convergence of issues of rurality and youth, or what happens when race encounters youth in place – the subject of the next chapter.

Conclusion

Analysing diverse race scholars whose work is essential for the present undertaking, this thesis has argued the salient character of race in current social experiences and has urged retention of the term to make possible the discussion of racism in Scotland.

Race is socially, economically, historically, politically and geographically constructed. This characteristic makes racism mutable, changing along with history and geography. However, skin colour is acknowledged here as the acutest, most significant form of racism and one that transcends time. Xenophobia emerges as a term linked with cultural racism, comprising domination and discrimination based on religion, language, or nationality. It represents broader practices of exclusion from the host population beyond skin colour and so is helpful for the Scottish context.

This thesis also highlights the value of whiteness studies in race discussions, particularly in such a predominantly white country as Scotland. The aim of incorporating the term 'white privilege' is to bring awareness of historical and geographical advantages operating, mainly unconsciously, for the benefit of whites. Through the adoption of the concept of 'white hierarchy', the study has explored more deeply the way different categories of whiteness are constructed according to how we position ourselves around white privilege, and thus, hopefully, has advanced the deconstruction of racial privileges in Scotland.

As whites have been historically the beneficiaries of racism, we can understand the silences surrounding racial privileges and the rejection of discussion of race productions and racism. This insight helps to explain the denial of racism and preservation of the silences in Scotland. Thus to disrupt the silences and to enable the discussion about racism and race productions, this thesis has opted for CRT as the theoretical lens for this study.

Through the history of race relations in the UK we have seen the impact of empire and the colonial period in the construction of race relations in Britain and persisting our days. When attending to the character of geography within race, this chapter has explored the way Scotland reflects an extension of experiences of racism from the English context, but with

the significant difference that the theory of race and racism is at a rudimentary stage in this part of the country. Geography seems to be playing a noteworthy role in the dearth of race discourse, the wall of silences on the subject of racism and the marked persistence of racism in Scotland. Overall, Scotland has consigned the discourse of race and racism to the South.

Educational research has been scarce, patchy and mainly urban. That which exists confirms that racism is a reality in Scottish schools, and that the country is attending to it unevenly. Teachers feel limited in their confidence regarding how to address and tackle racism in their classrooms, despite the significance of their role along with that of schools. Thus, education has proved to be the key to promoting anti-racism and challenging racism in Scottish classrooms and schools.

Finally, through race equality documents from a national level, to the specific race legislation in the Highlands, we have traversed from the Macpherson Report to the most recent Equality Act 2010. The latest document in this area, 'Equality Plan: A Fairer Highland' apparently reflects an absence of the word 'racism' and its replacement by the term 'inclusion'. This raises a question about the impact of such a shift on the current race experiences of minority young people.

To provide a fuller view of the race discourse, in the next chapter we will discuss how the discussion of race and racism needs to be extended into rural youth studies. We will do so by exploring the two other significant social issues in this work: rurality and yo

3

Chapter 3: When Race Encounters Youth in Place

'*We don't belong here, do we?*'

(Sara, fifteen, black, accessible)

Introduction

If the discussion about racism and xenophobia is practically non-existent in Scotland, it falls into the deepest silences within rural areas. As de Lima (2007) and Dwyer and Bressey (2008) have mentioned, experiences of racism and racial discrimination need to be understood by grounding them in specific geographies. Thus, it could be that the distinctive character of rural micro-geographies, with geographical isolation in particular, among other factors, is perhaps exacerbating the silences around racism and race productions.

In addition, critical rural scholars (see Agyeman and Spooner, 1997; Panelli et al., 2004; Holloway, 2007) have also agreed that rural contexts across the broad UK, including Scotland, are socially imagined as spaces of 'safe whiteness'. Such observations illuminate the way the idea of 'whiteness' – an image intersecting with countryside life and the perception of the rural – is plausibly shaping the cognizance and assumptions we may have about Scottish rural identity. Furthermore, it seems that the strongest resonance with 'Scottishness' might come from the Highlands (see Bicket, 1999; McCrone, 2001: 6; Masson, 2007). This is seen when the Highlands is rendered as a geographical space encompassing the most representative symbology of the Scottish national character. First,

the view of Scottish identity as white is reinforced in a rural area regarded as a space of whiteness, and simultaneously as a place of bucolic and romantic scenery, such as the Highlands (Koshin, 2001; Harder, 2015).

Second, this national identity is reinforced through the symbols embedded in the spread of Highland cultural manifestations, such as the Tartan, Celtic music, the Gaelic language, Highland dancing and Highland games (Morrison, 2003; Dziennik, 2012). Both aspects, considered together, are perhaps fuelling even further a sense of national character that is embodied in a white rural space in Scotland. Consequently, such assumptions, with the Highlands particularly imagined as a space of 'safe whiteness', may be hindering and obscuring issues of isolationism and poor race literacy, perhaps resulting in racism and xenophobia which rejects and excludes 'outsiders' and 'Others'. Thus, the distinctiveness of rurality in Scotland, in contrast to that of England is, perhaps, marked by this idea of a national identity as displayed in the understanding of Scottishness and all that it implies.

Overall, the factors mentioned are all regularly ignored or simply glossed over (see Myers and Bhopal, 2015: 2) in rural contexts in general: a silence probably fuelled further within the Scottish rural context as compared to the English.

Thus, to acquire a better understanding of how the processes of overlooking or, perhaps, neglecting the issue, leading to a vacuum surrounding the 'racialised other' (de Lima, 2012) in this rural area, this chapter will first pause to look at the currently scarce race discussions in the Highlands, to set the race/geographical context of this research. Next it will explore the terms 'rural' and 'rurality', deploying a critical discussion about the perception of the rural world. Establishing a distance from traditional rural studies, I will support critical contemporary rural contributions that understand 'rural' as a social construction (see for example Neal, 2002; Chakraborti and Garland, 2004; Neal and Agyeman, 2006). Through such an understanding, I will aim to make possible the perception of 'rural' micro-geographies and their corresponding social constrainers as potentially shaping the life experiences and aspirations of the young people considered in this study.

A further section will examine 'Youth Studies' and current discussions about young people's life experiences and aspirations. Thus, it is crucial to include the exploration of matters of youth in order to complete the picture of the main pillars of obstruction which stymie the lives and aspirations of the young people in this study. We must see how images of 'youth' are also the result of social creation (Wyn and White, 1997; Hopkins, 2010) whereby assumptions and stereotypes may be working against young people; and additionally, how contemporary debates reflect a shift in approaches towards youth, raising issues that problematise, through critical lenses, 'old assumptions' about young people. From examining the meaning of the concept of 'transition' and its contested nature, we move towards exploring the life aspirations of young people, including their rural contexts, through some related literature.

Finally, linking with the above, this chapter will look into the scarce body of literature around rural young people and how this could be relevant to the life experiences and aspirations of the black minority ethnic young people in the Highlands who are the subject of this study. At this point I will attempt to link my theoretical framework, CRT into current discourses and debates around rural youth, following on with the discussion, related to this thesis, of how issues of youth could be shaping the muteness around racism, xenophobia and any racial discrimination and how the silences become even acuter within rural contexts regarding the life experiences of minority young people in rural areas.

It is possible that those silences also result from the dearth or absence of recognition of racist and racial discrimination occurrences in the body of literature exploring rural youth life experiences and aspirations (see for example Shucksmith, 2004; Spielhofer et al., 2011). Such a deficit may be contributing to the neglect of the actual needs of black and minority young people in rural landscapes. This will be argued here, showing in the process how the Scottish Highlands are not an exception to the picture presented.

3.1. The Scottish Highland: The Further Muteness about Race and Racism

3.1.1. The Highland context

The Highlands has been acknowledged to be one of the most sparsely populated areas in Europe (see Atterton, 2007; Dubois, 2013). There are two historical reasons for this. Firstly, the Highlands Clearance during the 18th and 19th century when a significant number of land tenants were forced to leave, or evicted, by landlords and partly replaced by sheep (Devine, 2006). In addition, the industrial revolution attracted large numbers of the remaining, and still deprived rural population, into the main Scottish cities along the 19th and 20th centuries (Devine, 2006:231).

To compensate for the sparse population in the region, the Scottish Government has favoured inward migration, as mentioned before (see p. 9). This influx has been particularly relevant since the beginning of the century. The migration arriving has considerably been from Central and Eastern European countries, adding to the already established Asian community, the other largest group, arriving along the second half of the 20th century (Scotland's Census, 2011a; see Table 3, p. 84).

To explore what could have been the experiences of the existing minority communities in the Highlands, the work from de Lima (see for example 2001a, 2001b, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2012) has been a primary reference for this thesis. In addition, de Lima's work has been focusing primarily on black and minority households. Thus, with a few exceptions, she has primarily targeted adult minorities.

In her study 'Needs not Numbers', (2001a), de Lima looks into the reality of minority households in the Highlands. Her most robust and convincing argument has acknowledged the lack of service provision in place for the minority community, on grounds of their scarce numbers in rural Scotland. For de Lima, service provision should be in place in rural communities regardless of the numbers of the minority population, in keeping with the

Scottish policy of defending equal opportunities. Thus, she highlights the need for minority communities to be seen, heard and taken account of by rural local authorities.

In 2005, and later on in 2007, de Lima wrote diverse reports on the experiences of migrant workers in the Highlands. In the last one, a 'Study of Migrant workers in Grampian', de Lima et al. brought to light the ethnic tension she found in the Grampians between the minority ethnic community and the host population.

De Lima et al.'s study found that there was a need to develop policies and powerful strategies to ensure the inclusion of migrant workers, mainly from A8 countries, in order to alleviate the racial tension in the area. As an example, the study highlighted the scant experience migrant workers had of reaching social services they were entitled to, especially as a result of language difficulties.

In 2006, her chapter 'Let's keep our heads down and maybe the problem will go away – discrimination in rural areas', de Lima explores the circumstances she has encountered, with minority families undergoing persistent racist abuse and discrimination in rural Scotland. Following the works of Chahal and Julienne (1999) and Rayner (2001), she addresses the increased vulnerability to racism, xenophobia and racial discrimination of minority communities in rural areas. She relates how experiences of racism and discrimination are common in diverse fields, as, for example, in accessing higher and relevant education, health services or in finding employment (de Lima, 2001a, 2004).

de Lima also emphasises the continuous breach between practices of local providers and the policies in place for minority groups. To illustrate this, in 2005 in 'Addressing Racial Harassment in Rural Communities', she quotes from one of her participant's:

'Those in the hierarchy need to demonstrate their commitment to equal opportunity. Organisations pay lip service to equal opportunities. The informal racism is even more difficult than overt racism … you feel left out … attitudes need to change in a way that stops excluding certain people. Development comes from recognising difference and doing

something about it … I can relate a lot to Inverness. It is like a town … however underneath the society it is difficult to integrate/interact with people'. (quoted from de Lima, 2006: 84)

In 2009 de Lima, together with Wright, published 'Welcoming Migrants? Migrant Labour in rural Scotland', a study exposing the racism facing migrant workers arriving from A8 countries in the area of the Grampians. Their study was later reinforced by a report (2012) highlighting the increase in racist incidents in the Aberdeen area, comparing the figures with those in Glasgow city. This study was also reflected in the media (The Scotsman, 27.04. 2010):

'Figures released yesterday show Europe's self-styled 'oil capital' has racked up more reports of racism per head than another local authority area in Scotland. Police recorded 479 racist incidents in the city in 2008-2009, up 57 per cent from the same period a year before, according to new statistics from the Scottish Government'.

de Lima (2009a) has questioned the reasons for such an increase in racist incidents within a short period. One potential answer could be the increased numbers of Eastern European people coming from A8 countries after the local authority encouraged the waves of migration arriving in the Highlands, without, however, having the necessary services in place for them, as we saw earlier. Another additional explanation might be that the procedures for reporting racist incidents to the police have been recently enhanced and, consequently, encouraging the minority community to give accounts of racist experiences, once they were guaranteed further anonymity. These rationales are not mutually exclusive.

Narrowing the focus to young people, in a departure from other work, in 2002 de Lima explored the perceptions and experiences of young people from minority ethnic and mixed ethnic backgrounds in the Highland Council area. The majority of participants in the study were born in Scotland and the Highlands. The context of her studies was primary and secondary schools.

Although the majority of young people acknowledged an overall positive experience within their school, they also felt that there was no recognition of their cultures in the curriculum, and that there was a failure to develop an ethos that would acknowledge difference and diversity, with the result that minority young people 'perceived their cultural backgrounds were side lined' (de Lima, 2002a: 9).

In regard to bullying and experiences of racism, the majority of minority young people reported 'having experienced racist name calling' (ibid.: 11). Cases of bullying were reported mainly in secondary schools and were associated with minority young people not wanting to go to school or eventually truanting. Overall, the study highlighted the lack of sensitivity of teachers to bullying and racism, with the inevitable stressful circumstances for minority young people, along with the possibility of a negative effect on their school performance.

In 2007, de Lima revealed in her paper 'Ticking the Ethnic Box: The experiences of minority ethnic young people in rural communities in Education in the North' the poor practice she found in relation to black and minority ethnic young people in schools in the area. In the same paper, she called attention to the need for further research into minority youth in rural Scotland and more precisely in the Highlands.

Thus, overall, the Highlands area has been characterised by a lack of service provision for the minority community, as mentioned by de Lima (2001a).

To counterbalance the above, in 2010, de Lima made some recommendations for launching and promoting diverse multicultural projects and spaces for minorities in the Highlands. Through her work 'Feasibility study for establishing a multicultural centre in the Highlands', with the support of SHIMCA (The Scottish Highlands, Islands, and Moray Chinese Association) and funding from the Big Lottery, she focused on two targets. The first was provision of guidance and support for the black and minority ethnic community; the second was, in addition, the promotion of multicultural activities and interactions with the white population living in the Highlands.

To complete the narrative of minority young people's experiences, and of racism in the area, the press has on rare occasions raised isolated issues of racism in the remote Highlands. In one exceptional example, in 2009 a local journal, the *Lochaber New*s, using the words 'racist attack', printed a story of a Spanish family on the West Coast who were being persistently targeted. As the family explained to the paper:

'There are so many cars parked in the car park and only our vehicles have been damaged. We're afraid of what might happen next and that's why we have contacted the paper. We just want to get to the bottom of this … we are being targeted because we are Spaniards. This is racism and it is very shocking to think that someone or some people do not like us'.

When the victims reported the incidents to the police, the reaction from the Chief Inspector was:

'I can confirm we've received complaints in relation to damage to vehicles in Lochaber Road and our inquiries are on-going. We have no evidence at present to suggest this is a racially-motivated incident' (*Lochaber News*, 5 .02. 2009).

Although the answer from the police is a routinely cautious response while they wait for the incident to be solved, it might also be a reflection of how potential racism is still dealt with by institutions in the Highlands. Nevertheless, the above indicates, once more, that racism, xenophobia and discrimination seems to be a reality in the Highlands, probably as it is anywhere else. However, due to the scarce and limited research about minorities in rural Scotland, it would be difficult to contrast this incident with previous works.

Consequently, given the dearth of race theory and research in Scotland that extends to rural areas like the Highlands (de Lima, 2008), for the purposes of this thesis it will be helpful to review and determine which concepts related to rural and intersected with race, ethnicity and racism exist and how they operate in current theoretical discussions.

3.2. Rurality: A Social Construction

Before further exploring the term ‘rurality’, I will follow de Lima’s (2008) argument that it is crucial to understand how ‘rural’ is defined and contextualised.

3.2.1. What is rural?

Hoggart et al. (1995: 21) maintain that ‘There is little chance of reaching consensus on what is meant by “rural”’. They give two reasons for this. First, it is necessary to consider the disagreement about the notion of ‘rural’. The second reason, related to the first, is that the characteristics endorsed as meeting the sense of 'rural’ vary among the diverse cultures, demography, and environmental, socio-economic and political conditions found across Europe (Hoggart et al., 1995, cited in Copus et al., 2008: 47).

Coburn et al. (2007: 1) agree with Hoggart et al. that the concept of ‘rural’ cannot be universal. Even more, they believe that a unique definition will not meet all policy purposes in rural areas. Therefore, the choice of a definition of ‘rural’ may impact on who benefits from certain policies and who does not. Who is privileged over whom, thus, a relevant point for this thesis.

Overall, the most extended definition includes ‘rural’ as often derived from population criteria, grounded on population-based measures, updated over time and complemented with other variables such as age, gender, economic activity, car or computer ownership among others. Additionally, rurality is contemplated as a ‘residual category’ in opposition to urban, that is, as ‘non-urban’ (Copus et al., 2008: 47).

For the purposes of this thesis, I will adopt the Scottish Government’s (2015b: 6) definition. Here rural Scotland has been defined as ‘settlements with a population of fewer than three thousand inhabitants’. Additionally, rural Scotland has been divided by analysing drive times to larger settlements. The division is as follows:

- Accessible rural: those with a less than thirty-minute drive time to the nearest settlement with a population of ten thousand or more.
- Remote rural: those with a greater than thirty-minute drive time to the nearest settlement with a population of ten thousand or more (ibid.).

Thus, accessibility is measured by drive times to an urban area. This was done by calculating a 30-minute drive time from a large settlement of 10,000 or more, situated in the approximate middle of a set of smaller populations (i.e. Large and Other Urban Areas).

Remote will refer to areas where the drive time will be more than thirty minutes, or areas with a drive time of between thirty and sixty minutes, from a settlement containing ten thousand or more inhabitants.

In a final group, a greater distance is considered; that is:

Very Remote denotes areas which are more than a 60-minute drive from large settlements with a population of ten thousand or more.

Thus, the classification of urban/rural areas in Scotland results from the combination of both accessibility and population size. This classification is normally updated every two years. Categories of the classification for the years 2013 to 2014 are shown in Table 1 (ibid.).

Table 1. Scottish Government Urban/Rural Classification 2013-2014 (Six Fold Definition)

1. Large Urban Areas	Settlements of 125,000 people and over
2. Other Urban Areas	Settlements of 10,000 to 124,999 people
3. Accessible Small Towns	Settlements of 3,000 to 9,999 people, and within a 30-minute drive time of a Settlement of 10,000 or more.
4. Remote Small Towns	Settlements of 3,000 to 9,999 people, and with a drive time of over 30 minutes to a Settlement of 10,000 or more.
5. Accessible Rural Areas	Areas with a population of less than 3,000 people, and within a 30-minute drive time of a Settlement of 10,000 or more.
6. Remote Rural Areas	Areas with a population of less than 3,000 people, and with a drive time of over 30 minutes to a Settlement of 10,000 or more.

Source: Scottish Government Urban/Rural Classification 2013-2014:5

For de Lima (2008: 6), in some cases the ideas of remoteness and accessibility may converge and thus, the simple contrast between rural/urban may be accepted.

Rural areas in Scotland represent 98% of the country's landmass. However, of the nearly 5.3 million (5,295,000, Census 2011) people living in the country, fewer than one million live in rural Scotland.

Since the 2001 Census, the population has increased by 233,400 (6%) throughout the whole country. For the first time in a census, figures also reflect an increase in the ageing

population, showing more people aged 65 and over than people under 15, as we can see below (National Records of Scotland, Crown, 2013).

Table 2. Population in the Highlands and Scotland, by Age Group, 2014

Age	Population Highlands	Highland %	Population Scotland	Scotland %
0-15	40,136	17.2	911,000	17.0
16-29	34, 516	14.8	976,000	18.3
30- 44	41,072	17.6	1,019,000	19.1
45-59	53,148	22.8	1,157,000	21.6
60-74	43,455	18.6	851,000	15.9
75+	20,773	8.9	433,000	8.1
Total all ages	**233,100**	**100%**	**5,348,000**	**100%**

Source: NRS, 2016[3]. Last updated: 17.12.2015

When focusing on the figures for the Highland we can observe that population growth has been even greater than in the rest of the country: 233,100 (NRS, 2016), at fourteen percent compared to six percent for the whole of Scotland. Despite this increase, population density in the Highland is lower than in other council areas, at only nine percent (9.1), against sixty-eight (68.4) percent for the rest of the country, indicating one of the least densely populated rural areas in Europe, as mentioned.

Nevertheless, these figures for the Highland show that the population has grown at a faster rate than in the rest of Scotland. According to the Scottish Government, such growth is the

[3] http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files/statistics/council-area-data-sheets/highland-factsheet.pdf

result of policies encouraging inward migration to repopulate the area, mitigate ageing and boost the economy (The Scottish Government, 2015: 4).

Looking into the ethnicity of the population in the Highlands, we can see that there has been a rise in the number of people regarded as born outside the UK.

Table 3. Ethnicity in the Highlands. Census 2001/ 2011

Year	**All people** (number)	White Scottish (%)	Other White British (%)	**Total White (UK)** (%)	Mixed or Multiple white ethnic groups: Polish/Irish/Gypsy Traveller (%)	Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British, (%)	Other Ethnic Groups (%)	**Total Minorities (excluding white UK)** (%)
2001	208,914	82.23%	14.95%	**97.18%**	1.07%		1.76%	**2.83%**
2011	232,132	79.9%	14.7%	**94.6%**	Polish = 1.5% Irish – 0.6% Gypsy / Traveller = 2.0% **Total = 4.1%**	0.8%	0.6%	**5.4%**

Source: Scotland's Census, 2013[4]

[4] http://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/ods-web/area.html

Nevertheless, despite the specific and descriptive definitions and the data informing us of how people and space are distributed in rural areas, through the official and demographic information above, it is even more important for this thesis to recognise and unpack the concept of 'rurality' and what it introduces to the critical lenses of this study.

Homogeneous and descriptive views of rural worlds have been common in rural studies in the past and are still being offered at present. Shucksmith et al., in their work Rural Scotland Today: The Best of Both Worlds? (1996: 4), have claimed that the idea of 'rural' is 'socially constructed', adding: 'rural Scotland is what we and where we think it is since rurality is essentially a social construction'. In the same work they argue that rurality is:

'A symbolic shorthand which has meaning for most people, conveying a shared if implicit understanding of the countryside. This shared the understanding of what in turn influences our actions.' (ibid.).

Following de Lima, the idea of a 'shared understanding', advanced by Shucksmith et al., needs to be discussed here. De Lima (2008: 6) has made clear that such an understanding of rurality will depend on each person, as 'one's view of what is rural may only be partially shared with others'. Accordingly, it may be that the 'implicit understanding' of rurality advanced by Shucksmith et al. again only refers to part of rural society, although perhaps the broadest group.

Additionally, and reinforcing the perception of 'rural' as a social construction, Murdoch and Pratt (1993: 423) have recognised issues of power within the social construction of rurality. They argue that the emphasis should be on how rurality is constructed rather than on a specific definition of it. Who benefits from a certain definition of rurality?

Bunce (2003) believes that the critical effort made by academics in addressing rurality needs to be more compelling. If debates quibble over rural romantic representations and the understanding that the idealised country life varies between places and over time, then,

he believes, ‘evidence for a decline of the visions is scant’, and the rural idyll ‘is now embedded deep in the politics of the countryside’ (Bunce, 2003: 28).

Thus, the discussion of how rurality is being constructed and imagined seems to converge with issues of power. Indeed, Philo in his work ‘Neglected Rural Geographies’ (1992) has analysed how space and place are entangled in the life experiences of the communities who are different, or ‘othered’, and how such singularity, difference, within rurality needs to be taken into account in rural studies.

Unsurprisingly, a debate has been growing during the last decade in which rural scholars have viewed rurality through critical lenses (see Philo, 1992, 1993, 2000a, 2000b; Cloke et al., 2000; Mathews et al., 2000; Martin et al., 2001; Valentine and Holloway, 2001; Cloke, 2003, 2006; Panelli, 2004; Murdoch, 2006; Panelli et al., 2007). According to Cloke (2006: 18), the concept of rurality is imaginary; it ‘lives on in the popular imagination and everyday practices of the contemporary world’. For Cloke, the rural is recreated in two understandings: as ‘a significant imaginative space’ and as ‘a material status’, both being crucial to the construction of rurality. The significant imaginative space is linked to every cultural connotation denoting rural: from idyllic to oppressive. It encompasses the idea of the bucolic countryside as fuelling expectations of quiet, romantic and untroubled spaces. The romantic view can also be contrasted with perceptions of isolation, alienation, lack of services and social provision, or of the difficulty of preserving anonymity, these being the oppressive images of rural areas. Overall, the image of the romantic and idealised countryside prevails, among diverse conceptions of rurality. The material status referred to is ‘a material object of lifestyle, desired for some people – a place to move to, farm in, visit for a vacation, encounter different forms of nature, and generally practice alternative to the city’ (ibid.).

Cloke’s criticism of the images of rural life has significantly contributed to and shed light on the analysis of otherness in terms of their visibility. He makes us aware of how the presence of visible minorities in rural landscapes is ‘uncommon’, when, for example, simply walking into a rural café or pub can become an unpleasant experience especially for those who are visible (Cloke, 2004: 23). Cloke talks about practices used by villagers to

‘purify’ the whiteness of rural spaces. They can range from violent harassment and overt racist attacks to covert and subtle pressure on the racialised minorities to force them to assimilate into the local culture so as to fit in. Cloke illustrates this with a study conducted in Norfolk in 1994, containing some examples of how minorities tried to fit in. As one of his black participants explained:

‘I have to make changes to fit in, for my own mental health. I’m not sure it’s the way I should go. There is no platform for me … I’m allowed to entertain but they are toning me down! If you do not fit in you pay the price. It’s hard to have the confidence to fight back – if you are the one who suffers. You must try and fit in and suppress any feelings against this.’ (Cloke, 2004: 30)

For Cloke, the attitudes of rural white people can be contradictory. It might seem that if the minorities accept being assimilated they will be accepted by the local community. But in fact, even if they do, they are still signalled and stigmatised as different.

Esuantsiwa Goldsmith and Makris (1994, cited in Chakraborti and Garland, 2004: 26) illustrate this in a study they conducted with women of colour in a rural area in Derbyshire in 1994. One of their black female participants explained:

‘The attitude of white society in rural areas appears contradictory. They imply that if minority people conform and adopt white culture they will be accepted. But even if we do, we are still regarded as different.’

From their study, Esuantsiwa Goldsmith and Makris concluded that experiences of racism were ignored by local authorities on grounds of the scarcity of minorities in the countryside. Thus, minorities were made invisible by having their existence ignored, while simultaneously, those in power endorsed the extensive culture of racism by claiming that ‘there are no problems of race productions or racism’ in rural settlements (ibid.).

From the above we can infer that cultural isolation and discrimination are frequently found through a lack of information networks and scarce community support or social links for racialised minorities in rural areas. Cloke regards these rural attitudes of negligence on the part of white residents as 'covert racisms … often cloaked in a façade of polite condescension, as rural residents will assume a public face of tolerance of the "strangers" in their midst' (Cloke, 2004: 30a). On the contrary, white residents may actually be contributing to experiences of isolation, exclusion and alienation of minorities.

Cloke's approach of visualising rurality as imaginary is shared by most current critical rural and geography studies. However, Cloke's understanding of rurality perhaps needs a further twist in terms of his approach to whiteness. As CRT authors have argued (Crenshaw et al., 1995; Leonardo, 2004; Kendall, 2013), challenging racism implies understanding the idea of 'white Supremacy' or 'white privilege' and how it operates as being responsible for race inequalities. Thus, incorporating the concept of 'white privilege', as we saw in the previous chapter, and problematising it could be, perhaps, key to deciphering, neutralising and, hopefully, advance dismantling racism and race inequality in our subject here: rural youth contexts, a claim that we will explore in the next section.

3.2.2. Understanding Micro-geographies and the Impact on Race and Racism

There is an important body of literature exploring the social exclusion of minority communities in rural areas (see for example Jedrej ad Nuttall, 1996; Agyeman and Spooner, 1997; Cloke and Little, 1997; de Lima, 2001a, 2002, 2003, 2006, 2008; Neal, 2002; Chakraborti and Garland, 2004; Agyeman and Neal, 2006; Dwyer and Bressey, 2008; Dawney, 2008).

The majority, if not all, of authors above agree that experiences of minority people have been overlooked in most rural research. Some of the reasons given to displace race research in rural areas have been related to the small number of minority individuals and communities and, in addition, to the exclusionary perception of non-white identities living

in rural contexts in Britain. Agyeman and Spooner have claimed that, however small the 'population of colour', it is still significant, and how their experiences have been systematically 'neglected in studies which focus on the role of rurality as a signifier of an exclusive and white national identity' (Agyeman and Spooner, 1997: 197).

Jedrej and Nuttall examined the impact of rural repopulation in Scotland in a work published in 1996. Focusing on the area of the Highlands and its culture, they looked at the impact of rural repopulation, mainly from England, and how this involved tension, discord and uncertainty for the new people arriving, or 'incomers', as they were called, when seen as a problem for the indigenous or 'local' people. Examining what they call 'representations' – namely, terms such as 'locals', 'incomers', 'lairds', 'crofters', 'white settlers', 'the English', 'absentee property holders' and 'Highland culture' – the authors explain that the nature of the terms is regarded as contested and obscure. Jedrej and Nuttall claim that, although those terms exist and are regularly used by the people in the Highlands, with special emphasis on the words 'locals' and 'incomers', it is difficult to reach agreement on what these expressions really refer to (Jedrej and Nuttall, 1996: 4). Both expressions were repeatedly encountered during this research and probably reflect the difficulties for minority communities in feeling included in this rural space. The term 'incomers', following Jedrej and Nuttall, could refer either to those newly arrived, or to anyone who has not been born in the Highlands and been connected with the area over some generations. These categories include the white English migrants, who represent the largest group of incomers in the Highlands, as we saw in previously presented figures (Table 3). Indeed, whatever the culture of the Highlands implies, it can potentially extend the sense of exclusion to white English people. And there is even greater difficulty in being accepted as local for those minorities who are visible, or non-white, even though they might have been born in the Highlands (de Lima, 2007a). Overall, the concept of 'local' seems to trigger the process of 'othering', and thus of exclusion.

The ideas of 'local' and of how spaces interact in encounters with the 'other' need further consideration across geographies to understand the operation of racism and exclusion. Sarah Neal (2002), in her essay on Rural landscapes and representations of racism, drawing on the understanding of the role of the English rural landscape during the colonial period,

has identified two main concerns about English rural contexts. One is related to the way racialised social networks are constructed around space, as proved through 'the collapsing of rurality into whiteness'. The second consists of the special character of racism in rural contexts when compared to its nature in urban environments.

Neal, quoting Murdoch and Pratt (1997: 56), explains how the 'rural' has been commonly viewed in Britain 'as a "civilised retreat" … a zone where "Sameness" (British or English middle-class whiteness and heterosexuality) is reasserted in the wake of profound post-colonial anxiety'. Such post-colonial anxiety has been described as the 'white-flight', the migration from urban to rural settlements, attracted by the 'rural idyll' of escape from what is perceived as an unsafe and multicultural urban context. Thus, the rural idyll is grounded on a 'de-racialised discursive power', enclosing a representation of the English national identity and a place of safety and retreat (Neal, 2002: 446). And simultaneously, the rural idyll is constructed as a residual aftermath of colonial times.

Within this picture, Neal explains, service providers, politicians and policy-makers have misrecognised the connotations of race and racism in rural landscapes. Indeed, she argues, English rural contexts have been a space where social and political inequalities have been especially tangible for minority communities, and this reality has been reflected through a rurality lacking racialisation in England until recent years. On this view, the understanding of racism has a specific character in rural areas and needs different discourses and procedures from those applied to urban settlements. Finally, this approach reveals the imbalance in attention to issues of a racialised countryside on the part of policy-makers in rural contexts in England. Thus, Neal's work suggests a link between her discussion and the current circumstances surrounding policy-making, racism and race productions in rural Scotland, with a focus on this research in the Highlands. The social phenomenon of the 'white flight' has also taken place in this region. However, the feature of ethnical exclusion in the Highlands has its own specificities and differs from that in the English countryside. As de Lima (2006: 73) has explained, racism and racial discrimination in the Highlands are 'highly complex, manifested by the prevalence of prejudice against the English and "incomers"'. Therefore, white settlers running away from 'multicultural England' and settling in the Highlands have, perhaps, found themselves also targeted by the processes of

othering and exclusion by the ‘local’ people in the area. Such discrimination and exclusion towards English people, according to de Lima, may explain the deficit in exploring rural racism in Scotland because ‘the closest Scotland has come to addressing racism in rural areas is in relation to research on “incomers” and “anti-English” racism’ (de Lima, 2006: 81).

De Lima agrees with the view of rurality as a safe space within a monocultural preconception whereby ‘white’ is the norm and ‘difference’ is identified with outsiders. Thus, for the young people she has encountered, she explains:

‘[They] constantly referred to the ways in which their ethnicity is used by the majority “white” community to constrain and shape the way they might define themselves, making it difficult for them to develop a real sense of belonging to rural communities that draws simultaneously on their ethnic background and experiences in rural areas’ (de Lima, 2006: 92).

de Lima’s perception of the manifested ‘monoculturalism’, or what I argue is ‘the absence of a multicultural literacy’ among the indigenous population in the Highlands, is essential in understanding the process of racialisation in this rural area through the intersection of ‘difference’ and ‘rurality’. Such an intersection is clearly reflected in the terms discussed by Jedrej and Nuttall: ‘local’ or ‘one of us’ as included, and ‘incomer’ ‘outsider', ‘the Other’ as excluded from the rural community. Thus, given the disparity of views on rurality between those perceived as included and those excluded within the countryside, Chakraborti and Garland have made clear the disagreement between narratives they encountered relating the experiences of rural life for English white people and for the minority communities. In their work Rural Racism (2004), in the first instance they concur with the image of rurality constructed as 'idyllic' and peaceful; the rural as a space in which the British white tradition can be preserved, against all the changes around race and ethnicity which are taking place in urban areas – whilst for minorities the narratives were of feelings of exclusion, of not belonging to the place, and of experiences of racism, including actual racist attacks, consisting of either physical or verbal abuse, on more than one occasion.

Through their research, Chakraborti and Garland affirm the presence of rural racism and the diversity of its manifestations through 'policies [preserving] the "purity" of rurality in a number of different ways, ranging from the subtle to the downright criminal' (Chakraborti and Garland, 2004: 9). In their study, the preservation of 'purity' of the rural space is manifested equally through a whole village confronting a potential residence for asylum seekers, and through the tough times experienced by a black child in a rural school. The authors, against concerns about generalisation, have offered overt and covert practices of rural racism impacting on visible individuals and young people, practices which are intended to raise feelings of othering, alienation and exclusion in rural settlements.

As an example, Chakraborti and Garland explain how visible minority people running restaurants and retail businesses in rural areas often have to deal with abusive harassment. They provide this case of a takeaway in Norfolk in Derbyshire's report cited in the mentioned study from Esuantsiwa Goldsmith and Makris in 1994 (2004: 31, 32):

'Children are the worst. They say so many rude words to you. "You fucking foreigner" … You go and talk to their parents. They don't take it seriously. They laugh at you or say the same thing … People leave without paying. Do they do that to the English? ... Children threw a condom through the window. We sent the mother a solicitor's letter. It means she never comes anymore and she has told all in the neighbourhood not to come here for food … Windows have been broken and the insurance won't pay anymore … I'm stressed, I can't sleep. We are selling up and going after 15 years.'

Looking at the above narrative and the stress reported by the participant as a result of experiences of rural racism, it would be pertinent to question here how racism impacts on the health and well-being of people in rural minority communities. Askins (2008), taking a different approach, has incorporated emotions in her discourse about transformative politics of place and identity. She argues for the necessity of honest engagement with the difficulty of the daily interaction between otherness and fear, together with a comprehension of how encounters between diverse cultures, occurring in a particular place, could create a shift in 'how we perceive and feel about our others' (2008: 236). Askins claims that the recognition of real negative constructions of fear and exclusion has

repercussions in both the local and the minority communities. Thus, she argues that we need to provide 'a radical openness offering possibilities for other emotions' in the interaction between the local white population and visible communities in rural landscapes. She suggests that people should allow emotions such as empathy, care, as well as love, 'to become major players in our encounters with difference' (ibid.).

Askins suggests a model based on the celebration of multiculturality for diminishing negative emotions through encouraging actions to promote closeness between the local white population and the minority communities. Thus, through such multicultural celebrations with the minority groups present in the rural area, the intention would be to soothe any potential feelings of fear among the local white people.

Although Askins's idea of a 'multicultural celebration' offers some possibilities and good intentions as a means of narrowing the encounter with 'the Other' and, thus, negotiating the fear of 'the Other' on the part of the local whites, her suggestion is considered, in this thesis, an outmoded solution (see for example Ladson-Billings, 1998; Anthias, 2002). Indeed, Askins's defence of multicultural celebrations, as mentioned in the previous chapter, has proved to reproduce stereotypes and overstress differences of the minority communities, thus having a negative effect by reiterating 'difference' and distance instead of building links with the rural white population. Nevertheless, Askins brings the opportunity to incorporate the exploration of emotions in rural race research and how they could operate in the interaction between the local white population and minority groups. The intention is to bring awareness of how racism and racial microaggressions can have an emotional impact on rural minority communities through stress and with a potential persistent undermining of self-confidence in everyday life, as Solórzano (2010: 131) has suggested.

Finally, drawing on the above, we can show how the absence of 'multicultural literacy', with 'white' being seen as the norm, together with the lack of race discourse in rural contexts, has perhaps been triggering the silences and invisibility noted in rural areas. Whiteness, thus, needs to be problematised in rural landscapes. This is something we will discuss in the next section.

3.2.3. Rural Whiteness: Problematising the Concept in Rural Landscapes

In his work in 1992, Philo had already criticised traditional rural studies for being conducted by white, middle-class, middle-aged, able-bodied, heterosexual, Mr Averages. He vindicated the need for a further critical angle in rural works. Philo's provocation was responded to by a group of scholars.

In her work: 'Beyond Place: ethnicity/race in the debate of social exclusion/inclusion in Scotland' in 2003, de Lima argues that it would be necessary to dismantle 'white-ethnicities' perceptions in the Highlands. Such a move would help to enhance inclusion of the minority young people in the region and extend it to the rest of the country. As she has explained:

'There is also a need to explore and encourage the deconstruction of "white ethnicities", in order to facilitate a more inclusive approach to the issue of identities in rural communities and Scotland generally.' (de Lima, 2003:1)

In 2007, Holloway in her work, Burning Issues: whiteness, rurality and the politics of difference, has further discussed rural geographies, whiteness, and the idealised images spread through rural literature over time. Holloway has pointed to the scant research that empirically analyses race and rurality and problematises the whiteness of the British countryside. Through a case study exploring the dispute between rural residents and Gypsy-Travellers, Holloway argues, 'ideas about race and rurality relate to broader debates about the problematic whiteness of the rural idyll' (2007: 16).

Following the problematisation of the 'rural idyll', Holloway argues that rurality in Britain, within the scarce but compelling literature, is represented as an overwhelming whiteness, and shows the consequences this powerful whiteness can have 'for racialised minorities of their symbolic exclusion from, and marginalisation within, rural areas' (Holloway, 2007: 7). Therefore, the idea of an idyllic countryside seems to collide with the political perception of racialised minorities, ignoring how the powerful perception of whiteness within the rural idyll simultaneously involves exclusionary images of a racialised rurality,

and the way different minority groups are included or excluded according to such representations of rurality.

For Holloway the whiteness of the rural idyll first blurs the role played by racialised minorities in the construction of the countryside's social landscapes, and thus involves a denial of current minority life experiences. As an illustration of this point, derived from an extreme aspect of racial history which is also related to the present study, many stately homes in the Highlands, as well as in England, have been built with profits from the slave trade (*BBC News*, 26.07.2007; *Herald Scotland* 13.09.2015; Devine, 2015), a fact which is rarely, if at all, acknowledged in Scotland.

Holloway further argues that in the UK the rural landscape is constructed upon an idea of a 'white safe' space which is the antithesis of a multicultural, racially mixed and unsafe urban space. Such a construction, in rural idylls, of whiteness as a safe space constrains and diverts awareness of racist issues in the countryside, promoting the assumption that 'rural' means 'white' and minorities are scarce or non-existent; hence there are 'no race problems here' (Holloway, 2007a: 8).

Thus, the fact that the countryside is mainly perceived as white, or is whitewashed, is the result of the bleak representation of racialised minorities, and reflects the way the absence of discussion of racism and race productions in rural areas may have had an impact by neglecting and misrecognising the experiences of minorities, who are considered irrelevant and hidden; obscured by the idea of a majority 'safe white'.

In addition, as mentioned before, current literature is challenging the idea that racism is not an issue in rural areas; thus it is gradually shifting the misconception that rurality cannot be affected by racism (see Neal, 2002; Bonnet, 2000). Indeed, there is growing recognition by academics of the experiences of alienation of racialised minorities in the countryside in the UK, as we saw (Chakraborti and Garland, 2004; Connolly and Keenan, 2002; de Lima, 2002b, 2004, 2005a, 2005b).

Dwyer and Bressey (2008) have highlighted the way geographies give racism and race productions a distinctive character and, consequently, establish the significance of microgeographies in understanding how images of race are constructed, boosted and encountered in everyday life. Hence the importance of daily negotiations of ethnic difference 'within the micropolitics of everyday social contact and encounter' (Dwyer and Bressey, 2008: 5b), and of how ideas about race and ethnicity are elaborated through particular encounters and in particular places.

Thus, the silences surrounding racialised minorities are, perhaps, symptomatic of the need for further understanding of how the idea, gleaned from CRT, of White privilege operates in the construction of a racially exclusive countryside. White privilege, as we saw, enables one to explain how and why power operates and is negotiated in communities with a white majority. Given that local authorities are mostly white, it would be understandable if whiteness were to have an impact on how power and material resources were distributed on a daily basis in rural contexts, and how this may have an impact on minority youth's experiences.

Thus, drawing on all the above, it would be interesting to see the possible aftermaths of these issues of race and rurality in the life experiences and aspirations of the minority young people participating in this study. We will consider what happens when young people's experiences tend to be ignored or misrecognised (Heath et al., 2009), a situation we will analyse in the next section, through a body of literature pertinent to youth studies.

3.3. Youth: How Age Can Impinge on Life Experiences and Aspirations

Overall, young people's lives have been regarded with interest in social research (see for example, Dwyer and Wyn, 2001; Leyshon, 2002, 2008; Shucksmith, 2004; Panelli, 2002, 2004; Wyn, 2004; Panelli et al., 2007; Furlong and Cartmel, 2007; Best, 2007; Heath et al.,

2009; Hopkins, 2007, Hopkins, 2010b; Spielhofer et al., 2011). That has been especially true since the beginning of our twenty-first century when the literature around them burgeoned, with an impact on social studies. Australia and Norway have both been at the forefront of youth research with the publication of new youth journal studies (see for example Woodman, 2009; Heath et al., 2009a; Wyn et al., 2012; Coffey and Farrugia, 2014; Pini et al., 2013).

A possible reason for this increase could be the awareness that youth experiences may forecast further social changes in our contemporary societies. As Heath et al. (2009: 1) have reflected young people's experiences can bring significant prognoses for our societies, explaining: 'Young people's lives are … frequently held up as a "social barometer" of wider societal changes, whether for good or ill and as such are constantly in the spotlight'.

But other acceptable reasons could include the fact that we have all been young at some point in our lives, regardless of differences in experience, and that this circumstance may have provided us with a directly observational role at that period.

And the following may provide a plausible additional explanation of why youth studies could be a subject of endless fascination in contemporary sociology. To define the term 'youth', Wyn and White (1997: 10) claim, 'age is socially constructed, institutionalised and controlled in historically and culturally specific ways'. For Panelli et al. (2007: 5), the word 'youth' is 'adopted to convey the socially and culturally constructed notions of particular stages of the life-course'. Skelton and Valentine (1998) see the concept of 'youth' as referring to a period of life marking the transition between childhood and adulthood, in which social and cultural constructions emphasise circumstances and expectations, documenting a unique and distinctive series of sub-cultures.

During their short history, youth studies have been undergoing change. That aspect of the subject will be analysed in a further section, where I examine the concept of transition and what it implies in contemporary youth discussions. There I will pause over the idea of neoliberalism and the effect of individualisation (Beck, 1992): how they could, perhaps, be

shaping young people's experiences and aspirations. Thus, in a subsequent part, I will traverse the idea of life aspirations and how young people and the adults around them perceive aspirations. There I will pause to look into the specific character of aspirations within rural youth's life experiences and engage with how rurality could 'mould' youth aspirations and why.

Finally, given the dearth of material about racism and race productions in rural youth studies, this last section will attempt to connect CRT with the prevailing narratives about rural youth. The hope would be to raise awareness about the significant role of racism, xenophobia and race productions for the life experiences and aspirations of black and minority ethnic young people in rural landscapes.

3.3.1. The Brief History of Youth Studies

Regardless of the short history of the literature surrounding young people, its content has been transformed since its origin. It has gone from initial 'monolithic views' grounded on traditional stances which, in earlier works, contemplated all young people on the basis of assumptions about similar experiences, to a gradual shift towards more updated and 'empathic approaches' to young people's circumstances. The latest refreshing move comes from the acknowledgement of diversity in young people's experiences and the contribution of critical lenses as against old, conservative perceptions (for example Dwyer and Wyn, 2001; Heath et al., 2009).

Such a change in views has implied a better understanding, in current works, of young people's lives, circumstances and ambitions. In fact, youth research has shifted from early structural and cultural approaches in the 1970s, with a tendency to view young people through that linear lens and within a capitalist, or neoliberal, theoretical framework, towards modernist, post-modernist and, most recently, critical neo-Marxist stances (see Wyn and White, 1996; Furlong and Cartmel, 2007; Giroux, 2012).

Thus, initially, it is important to consider here the acknowledgement of diversity in the experiences of young people, with a significant recognition of the heterogeneity of youth, which has been asserted by a vast number of contemporary youth scholars (see, for example, Bennet, 2004; Arnett, 2007; Stokes and Wyn, 2007; McDonald et al., 2011). Their works show a consensus that young people's lives can no longer be seen as universal realities, but instead must be acknowledged as multi-faceted experiences.

Traditional stances have regarded young people as passive recipients of adult constructions within which they have been expected to reproduce the model of their parents or of those adults accountable for them. Both the young persons and the adults have mainly developed such conventional expectations, either consciously or unconsciously. As a result of this traditional view, young people have been reckoned to be perpetuating the type of society which has made previous generations feel comfortable. The young people's experiences and aspirations have not been designed to meet or express their actual needs, but to satisfy those of the adults around them (Giroux, 2012).

Against the above, recent critical authors (see for example Finn and Chekoway, 1997; McDonald et al., 2012; Kellner, 2014) have challenged this passive role assigned to young people's lives, an assumption carried over from the past, which seems to operate in most contemporary societies. These scholars claim that young people should be considered separately from their parents or any other adults accountable for them. Such disassociation has brought an excellent opportunity to establish a distance between the young person and her or his predecessors and thus for young people to be 'seen' and perceived as different from their associated adults. With this avant-garde view, critical youth scholars introduce the possibility of producing new responses to young people's emergent lives within their contemporary societies and, consequently, asking adults to accept that they do not belong to them anymore, if they ever did.

Hence, in opposition to previous traditional works, critical youth academics (see also Leyshon, 2002; Cole, 2012) instead perceive young people as active agents in their identity formation and decision-making. This refreshing perspective implies the understanding of

young people through their own 'cultural lenses' and their own 'ways of seeing' their lives: a view seen as essential and endorsed by this thesis.

Such a shift in the consideration of young people has probably been responsible for recognising them as effective contributors to cultural production and change when reinterpreting their experiences within their culture and values as members of our societies. This posture has contested the old conventional picture, mentioned above, of young people as 'submissive objects', internalising their adults' culture and traditional backgrounds without resistance, and of the way, through those old lenses, young people who were not following the 'expected path' prescribed by parents and adults in general, would have been considered failures in the system (McDonald et al., 2011).

Given the importance of the concept of recognition in youth studies, I will pause here to explore what the term means through the work of Fraser in 2000. For Fraser, 'one becomes an individual subject only by virtue of recognising, and being recognised by, another subject' (Fraser, 2000: 109). Thus, recognition from those around us is crucial for maturing a self-sense. When we are misrecognised or denied recognition from others, this has a double impact: on our confidence and on our identity.

Consequently, continuing with Fraser, to promote the development of young people's confidence it is essential to recognise them as possessing 'the status of individual group members as a full partner in social interaction', such status resulting from 'examining institutionalized patterns of cultural value … if and when such pattern constitutes actors as peers, capable of participating on a par with one another in social life, then we can speak of reciprocal recognition and status equality' (ibid.: 113).

Fraser's idea of recognition brings here the understanding that social actors, in our case young people, who are normally perceived as problematic and powerless, or are simply ignored and, thus, misrecognised (see for example Furlong and Cartmel, 2007; Skelton, 2008), have been approached during social interaction with 'misrecognition and status subordination'.

Extending the idea of misrecognition to justice towards difference and hence to minority young people as the subject of this study, Fraser (ibid.: 114) offers the opportunity to reflect on how the idea of 'status' can also be applied to the level of 'recognitional justice'. This term refers to the acknowledgement of justice for difference, as in the case of minority young people. Thus, when minority young people are absent from the process of recognition, it is logical to believe that they have been impacted on in their negotiation of identity. This misrecognition of difference and the impact on identity construction for minority youth has been especially intensified by the phenomenon of globalisation (Andersson, 2000). Such development is reflected, for example, in the lack of policies supporting and protecting black and minority rural young people, or in the potentially poor practice by service providers in rural settlements (see de Lima, 2007). As we have seen, misrecognition is performed through 'institutionalised patterns'; thus, the lack of recognition of difference brings issues of justice. It could be responsible, for example, for policing practices based on 'racial profiling', when racialised young people are associated with criminal attitudes in rural contexts.

Consequently, this thesis needs to consider that misrecognition may well be shaping the life opportunities and aspirations of the black and minority ethnic young people here.

Given that misrecognition can take diverse forms, social class is another of the representations through which it can manifest. Thus, maldistribution, as Fraser has explained, is a logical outcome of the deeply embedded economic inequalities in the current globalised world. As a result, social class may have a clear impact on the life experiences and aspirations of the young people in this study. Upper- or middle-class young people have the opportunity not only to obtain a better quality education but also, as a further advantage, to develop and negotiate a privileged background of cultural and social capital (Bourdieu, 1989). Following Patterson (2007), we can see how such a privileged position within the young person's social context will help her or him to develop certain 'soft skills' making it possible to build a 'social network' facilitating future employability, social advantages and the achievement of greater career success than is possible for young people with fewer or no such privileges.

Thus, at the same time as youth studies provide recognition of the value of young people's lives and aspirations through acknowledgement of their active role in our societies, such a shift has been made possible by the transformations occurring in the young people's contexts. As Bradley and Devadason (2008) have suggested, those changes have been especially real since the 70s (Bradley and Devadason, 2008: 120): to begin with, through the phenomenon of globalisation mentioned, and more precisely through 'globalised employment' in our world. The global market for employment has been translated into an increase in the number of young people moving to and from different countries and even continents in the hope of finding better labour opportunities. In relation to that development, Western economies have gone through several processes of de-industrialisation which have had the effect of raising levels of unemployment.

In addition, the spread of ICT (Information and Communication Technologies) has introduced new and faster ways of global communication for young people, whereby information and social networks are dependent on the internet: a key characteristic shaping contemporary youth relationships and identities (Castell, 2009). Furthermore, all previous changes have been coterminous with a persistent and dangerous increase in long-term unemployment, introducing an extra factor of risk in the lives of young people at present (Beck, 1992; Wyn, 2004; Furlong, 2006; Furlong and Cartmel, 2007). The last feature is what Standing (2014: 80) has named as 'the precariat', a new 'dangerous class' among youth emerging from the 'risk society' (Beck, 1992).

A positive contrast to this last-mentioned factor is seen in the spread of female employment and a flexibilisation of employers' strategies, introducing some enhanced changes in late modernity. This has allowed young people, and particularly young women, the possibility of taking more flexible approaches to both the labour market and further education, or opened up the option of combining both (Giddens, 1990).

Considering all the previous, it is understandable that such transformations are probably having an impact on young people's lives and their experiences during the transition from education to a steady work life at present. Thus, exploring youth transitions is an endeavour we will pursue next.

3.3.2. Understanding Youth Transitions

Unsurprisingly, the impact of all the shifts mentioned above may even be responsible for further important changes in the patterns of young people's life transitions between school and work, as compared to the past, and these consequences are still unknown.

As Wyn (2004) and Furlong and Cartmel (2007) have argued, there are three plausible changes involved in current life transitions. One, is the lengthening of the period between school and work. A second change, and related to the previous, is the increase in complexity and insecurity during such period, and this leading to a third change: the more differentiated and individualised character of youth transitions.

The lengthening of youth transitions has been well explained by the expansion of higher and further education in Britain since the 70s. Such change stems from the greater amount of time that it can take for any young person, regardless of background, to settle down into what could be agreed on as a 'steady career path' (see Wyn, 2004: 9; Furlong and Cartmel, 2007; Bradley and Devadason, 2008; Pollock, 2004, 2008). Additionally, the delay may impact on the time a young person takes to leave the parental home, and is clearly related to the maldistribution of wealth in contemporary societies, as mentioned by Fraser (2000). Accordingly, young people in a less favoured economic position will be forced to stay longer with their parents.

Secondly, transitions have also become more precarious and complex at present (McDonald et al., 2005). Young people are more vulnerable to unemployment and job loss. Indeed, their trajectory from education into that 'steady career path' could sometimes follow an 'on and off' process between 'study, temporary employment, unemployment, training, self-employment, part-time or full-time employment, "fiddly jobs" and all that within the black economy' (Wallace 1990, 1997, 1998; Bradley and Devadason, 2008: 120). Such a precarious and complex process can also explain the lack of linearity and the complexity of their preparation for 'adult employment' and economic independence.

Finally, transitions may have become more differentiated and individualised as a result of the pluralisation of options within education and the labour market (Bradley and Devadason, 2008: 126). The broader offerings in higher and further studies have increased the diversity of later work options. This has occurred together with an increase in competition among young people who are, in many cases, forced into an individualised process of transition to gain a place in the risky labour market (Beck, 1992) – a reflection, perhaps, of the strong influence of neoliberal approaches and the existing capitalist framework of our contemporary societies.

In view of all the above, the use of the terms 'multiple transitions' (Stokes and Wyn, 2007) or 'fractured transitions' from Bradley and Devadason (2008), instead of 'transitions' is preferred by an important number of youth scholars to refer to the period leading from education to stable employment. The term, thus, applied to the broad variety of options, not only for further studies, but also for any possible activity, whether working or unemployed, or any circumstances experienced by young people at present.

Furthermore, the relevance of the term 'transition' itself has been questioned in youth studies (see MacDonald, 1998; Fergusson et al., 2000; Stokes and Wyn 2007). Indeed, the contested nature of the word 'transition' is a clear example of growing dissatisfaction with this concept. Stokes and Wyn (2007: 497) offer several arguments to criticise it. Firstly, the 'fairly generic' meaning of the concept makes it relevant to any other social group at other stages of life: e.g., childhood, old age, etc. Second, it carries assumptions about young people's lives that are not examined at all, but are based on the 'Baby Boom' generation (1960s/1970s), treated as the norm. Critics call them normative assumptions and believe that they 'have exerted a powerful hold on thinking about young people' (ibid.) Moreover, normative assumptions could be responsible for framing social expectations around youth and this, perhaps, grounded on 'neoliberal stances'.

For neoliberal stances, this thesis refers to 'neoliberalism': a conceptualisation surrounding the renaissance of economic liberalism. Adam Smith initiated liberalism in the eighteenth century, and it was later recreated with new force in the mid-twentieth century (see Harvey, 2005; Barnett, 2014; McGuigan, 2014). At that time, a school of Austrian economists such as von Mises, von Hayek, and Schumpeter, developed ideas that focused on hostility to

centralised states and were committed to encouraging principles of private property and promoting systematic individualisation, values which are also reflected in the work of the so-called Chicago School of economists (Barnett, 2014: 268).

Following David Harvey (2005: 2), neoliberalism has been explained as 'a theory of political and economic practices' upholding the idea that human well-being is best achieved through 'liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework appropriate to such practices. The state has to guarantee, for example, the quality and integrity of money. Thus, in a neoliberal approach the state should establish every institution necessary (defence, police, legal structures) to protect and preserve, "by force if need be", the efficient behaviour of the markets' (ibid.). As Harvey explains: 'Furthermore, if markets do not exist (in areas such as land, water, education, healthcare, social security, or environmental pollution) then they must be created, by state action if necessary' (ibid.). Consequently, by the neoliberal approach, state arbitration of the markets should be as minimal as possible.

For Barnett, socio-political practices of neoliberalism have been significantly relevant in Western countries since the 1970s and 1980s and extended to the rest of the world. In these years, so-called Thatcherism in the UK and the Reagan Era in the USA, together with support from key international agencies such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, were mainly responsible for the development and spread of neoliberalism across the world; it is because of them that neoliberalism is fully operative in most countries worldwide at the moment (Barnett, 2014: 270).

Thus, neoliberal views have been held responsible for encouraging social values such as individualisation, competition, meritocracy and exclusionary practices, among other forms of inequality in contemporary societies (Beck, 1992; McGuigan, 2014), and seem to be seeking to displace collective values that promote public and community practices.

Following Barnett, this thesis argues current practices in education are potentially responsible for reproducing social injustice instead of tackling it in Britain. Such criticism,

perhaps, underpinned by current critical social studies denouncing inequalities and theorising about dismantling neoliberalism (see for example Giroux, 2009; Kotz and McDonough, 2010; Bürkner, 2011). Indeed, the education system, particularly in the West, may be part of the problem for echoing and perpetuating neoliberal models among young people. Perhaps, neoliberalism is mirrored, for example, when current education systems encourage students to be competitive, focusing on marks and achievement, promoting meritocracy, and, apparently, sidelining values and attitudes favouring values such as cooperation, kindness and sharing, among others.

Thus, as Barnett elucidates: 'proponents of free-markets think that people should act like utility maximising rational egoists, despite lots of evidence that they don't' (Barnett, 2014: 269). Consequently, such extended practices of competition and meritocracy in education are perhaps, accountable for many young people undergoing stress and depression during their studies, and, as an extreme case, for the numbers of 'NEETs' (Young People Neither in Education, nor Employment nor Training) – currently 13.02% of all young people in the UK (Office for National Statistics, February 2015) of which Scotland represents 8.4% (The Scottish Government, 2014).

Furthermore, Ansell et al. (2012: 54-55 within Kraftl et al., 2012) have blamed UNESCO for being part of the problem when promoting neoliberal attitudes in young people in 21st century. When encouraging them, for example, for the role of active consumers and active producers for the system. Thus, it seems that an important section of education, instead of providing resources to rebuild confidence, agency, unity, solidarity and personal growth in the new generations, instead is, plausibly, promoting and perpetuating inequalities and exclusion as the young people become part of the neoliberal model.

Drawing on the above, we can elucidate how 'normative assumptions' can probably be regarded as well entrenched in traditional and homogeneous discourses about young people. Thus, demonstrating a lack of interest in youthful 'agency' and the absence of recognition of youth values when exploring youth transitions. Arguably, the misrecognition of youth agency is plausibly accountable to impact their life experiences and aspirations (ibid.)

In addition, following Finlay et al. (2009: 864), youth identities may be formed from media adverts or TV programs or even both, with 'some of the dreams expressed … influenced by the media and the exposure, these young people have to television and its associated role models'. Indeed, the media are probably playing an important role in encouraging young people to regroup into certain clusters. When following some features and images from TV or magazines, they may be shaped and manipulated into choosing certain trends and lifestyles (see also Dwyer and Wyn, 2001)

From these observations, we can see that certain social expectations are probably imposed on young people's lives, in keeping with old traditional beliefs, and perhaps even impacting on their well-being: for example, through the demand on youth to do well in studies, or perhaps, achieve a well-remunerated employment. Thus, social expectations over youth are transferred to the young person's aspirations and, consequently, to the level of education or employment that they are envisioned as achieving at certain ages.

Considering all the above factors, it is logical to understand and find plausible the experience of social pressure, the potential stress, and the threat of exclusion for young people in current societies. Accordingly, as a result of such social pressure, compounded by lack of recognition, young people are at risk of negative social, economic and personal consequences. Thus, social expectations can be causing them to disengage from any aspirations – as reflected by the number of NEETs.

Nevertheless, youth studies are gradually making a positive contribution to contemporary youth experiences and bringing some hope. As an example, when dismantling normative assumptions, by Dwyer et al., in a study in 2003, challenged the widespread social belief that young people dropping out of school without completing compulsory studies (or 'early school leavers') are failures. In their study, Dwyer et al. concluded that 80% of the 'early school leavers' returned to formal education within five years.

Finally, to complete the picture of youth transitions, looking into the nature of youth aspirations would thus be an essential step forward towards understanding current youth realities.

3.3.3. Young People's Life Aspirations in Rural Areas

Following the previous discourse, the first step when examining the life aspirations of young people in rural areas, including minority youth, would be to acknowledge that they can no longer be perceived independently of their social context and circumstances.

From the body of literature available (see for example McBrayne, 1987; Quaglia and Cobb, 1996; Dwyer and Wyn, 2001; McDonald, 2005, 2012; McDonald et al., 2011; Gutman and Akerman, 2008; Spielhofer et al., 2011), two threads are evident: one related to aspirations that embody some component of a certain 'reality', that is, what young people expect to achieve; and the other differentiating expectations from hopes and dreams.

In the first group, for example, McBrayne (1987: 1), when referring to the term applied in rural youth literature in the US, has explained it as 'an individual's desire to obtain a status object or goal such as a particular occupation or level of education'; while expectations are: 'the individual's estimation of the likelihood of attaining those goals, plans, ambitions or dreams'.

Quaglia and Cobb (1996: 130) have presented a combined definition of present and future as 'a student's ability to identify and set goals for the future, while being inspired in the present to work toward those goals'. Their definition implies two elements: inspiration and ambition. The first one related to an activity which is found motivating and, thus, enjoyable and useful. The second, referring to the perception that the activity in the present can lead to achieve those future goals.

For Gutman and Akerman (2008: 3), they have referred to aspirations as:

'The career and educational ambitions of young people, but it can also be used to refer to more general life ambitions, such as wanting to start a family or live in a particular area.'

Overall, the above definitions seem to be embedded of the same normative assumptions and neoliberal views that we discussed before. Thus, assuming homogeneous conditions and ignoring potential social constrainers and unequal power positions for the young people.

Nevertheless, the definition given by Gutman and Akerman can be helpful here in establishing a contrast with earlier examples. It encompasses young people's career goals and educational aspirations, and even extends to 'more general life ambitions, such as wanting to start a family or live in a particular area' (ibid., 2008).

In addition, Gutman and Akerman have drawn a distinction between, or hierarchy of, low and high aspirations in young people. Accordingly, when analysing 'low aspirations', they even provide a further division between ambitions, classifying them into three types: 'high, realistic and low aspirations'. For these authors, aspirations are considered relative and therefore what could be a high aspiration for one young person could be a low one for another: 'High aspirations for an individual with particular life circumstances may be considered low aspirations for another individual with different circumstances' (ibid., 2008). The consideration of change, or mobility, within aspirations, thus, gives a dynamic character to the concept of ambition, which is taken into account in this study.

Additionally, the acknowledgement Spielhofer et al. make of structural factors such as transport and opportunities in rural areas may have a bearing here. No doubt, the transport situation may be a constraint affecting young people's mobility and independence. In fact, the possibility of lack of convenient public transport or even of long distances between education and training providers can introduce an issue affecting access to learning opportunities.

In relation to transport issues, previous research suggests that rural young people post-sixteen are more likely to report transport as a barrier to going on to further studies than those living in urban areas (Storey and Brannen, 2000; Spielhofer et al., 2010). As an ECOTEC report has highlighted: 'Transport issues, distance and time involved to travel to providers limit young people's ability to access training and employment' (ECOTEC, 2006).

Thus, having a driving licence might be the answer to gaining independence and fulfilling young people's aspirations, although we must also consider the expense of obtaining a driving licence and all the costs incurred by having one's own vehicle.

With reference to educational and job opportunities in rural areas, these may have a specific impact on young people's possibilities. In the case of education, a restricted curriculum could be an issue; the Commission for Rural Communities discovered that learners in rural settlements had a more limited choice of studies (CRC, 2006). This was a consequence of the smaller size of rural schools, resulting in the need to reduce their curriculum. The same study found that most post-16 education centres were in urban locations.

In contrast to the above, some evidence proves that young people perform better in schools in rural than in urban areas. In 2011, a study conducted by Irvin et al. revealed that rural youth have 'relatively high aspirations' (Irvin et al., 2011). Their sample was multiracial, drawn from young people living in a rural area in the USA. They argued that these high aspirations might be a consequence of the young people living in rural areas facing fewer community risks than those in urban settlements (e.g., gangs, violence). This may be having a positive impact on their learning in school and, therefore, may be shaping their life ambitions in a positive way (ibid. 2011). Spielhofer et al. (2011: 2) back up this result in their study, saying: 'attainment of learners in rural areas is slightly higher than in urban areas'.

As for job opportunities, it seems that offers are more limited in rural locations than in urban areas. This may have a special impact on those looking for apprenticeships, and is probably due to smaller employers being less likely than larger ones to offer jobs (The Commission for Rural Communities, 2006).

Overall, related literature suggests that for a young person living in a rural area the chances of fulfilling his or her life aspirations could be limited compared to those in an urban settlement. It may mean that those staying could be facing a future in which they may be discriminated against in their educational aspirations when compared to their urban peers.

This may be partly explained by a restricted curriculum forcing them to end up studying a course they did not want to study, then, perhaps, dropping it, or even becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training).

It also indicates that the above barriers, namely transport, employment opportunities, and limited curriculum, when combined, may be encouraging rural young people to lower their aspirations to complete higher education. As the mentioned report by ECOTEC highlighted: 'Young people who have made the decision that they will want to work in their local communities in the future, are less likely to be thinking about going to university or moving away to study' (ECOTEC, 2006: 95).

As an additional unfair circumstance, related to the 'maldistribution' noted by Fraser (2000), it could be that the young people staying in their rural settlements will be aware that their average wages will generally be lower than if they worked in an urban area. 'Some young people, particularly those committed to returning to work in their local rural economy, were realistic about the salaries they were likely to earn and had a strong sense of accountability and prudence which impacted upon their further and higher educational choices' (ibid., 2006).

Additionally, the essential role that cultural and social capital (Bourdieu, 1989) play in shaping young people's life aspirations and constraining their options.

To exemplify the above in a quantitative study by NatCen in 2009, it was highlighted that parents in the rural area who had low levels of education had a more negative impact than urban parents in similar circumstances (NatCen, 2009). As they explain: 'Students in rural areas whose mothers had low levels of qualifications, made less progress in school compared with similar students in urban locations' (NatCen, 2009).

Nevertheless, the study lacked any acknowledgement of the circumstances of those parents and how social and economic inequalities might be operating against the life aspirations of their descendants.

Indeed, parents and a distinctive neighbourhood are both related to social capital; this factor needs, at the same time, to be interrelated with race and ethnicity, and that in turn with social class, since a large percentage of minority ethnic communities live in deprived areas in Scotland (The Scottish Government, 2014).

Thus, it would be interesting also to question whether the above rural youth authors consider the potential impact of further societal barriers on aspirations. For example, Spielhofer et al. (2011: 4,5) treat race, as a personal factor and enter an even more contentious arena when they suggest that gender and ethnicity are personal variables, as if they were optional. Thus, this study ignoring any connection between race, gender, faith, social class, or any social constrainer, in shaping life ambitions. They acknowledge, however, that the division within aspirations provided is not static, inasmuch as young people's individual career and educational goals could be shaped and reshaped by structural, cultural and personal factors. Nevertheless, although Spielhofer et al.'s work provides insights and some helpful general concepts and ideas for this thesis, overall their analysis lacks any critical perspective and falls into the category of a descriptive work.

Distancing, thus, with previous descriptive rural works, it is therefore essential for this study to acknowledge the effects on minority rural youth of the convergence of social constrainers. When race encounters youth in place – encompassing whiteness and silences, as discussed before – and simultaneously, intersecting with youth issues, since all these factors may be affecting the aspirations of minority youth, being key variables in understanding their life ambitions.

Consequently, I will attempt in the next section to show the intersection of the three socially constructed categories addressed in this study: race, rurality and age. There I hope to extend Fraser's idea of recognition of difference by applying it to rural youth studies. In doing so, I will use the lenses of CRT to consider all the above social constructions, or categories of inequality: race, rurality and age, within the political framework of intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989), developed in Chapter Four, and as part of the paradigm of CRT adopted in this thesis. By this means I intend and hope to provide a broader political ontology with which to illuminate life experiences of minority rural youth, and the impact race, perhaps, can have in shaping the young people's life aspirations.

3.4. When Race Encounters Youth in Place: CRT in Rural Youth Studies

As we saw in the previous chapter, most of the body of literature containing geographical research on racism affecting young people has examined urban settings. In addition, we have confirmed in previous sections how the vast amount of work exploring racism and race issues within rurality has mainly focused on adults.

There have, however, been some exceptions. One is Panelli's study 'Young rural lives: strategies beyond diversity' in 2002 and the later work together with Punch and Robson, in 'Global Perspective on Rural Childhood and Youth' in 2007, providing a broad account of rural youth experiences across the world. In addition, Nayak in 2008, in a study of young people in the North East of England called 'Young People's Geographies of Racism and Anti-racism: The case of North East England' (2008) has challenged social preconceptions denying racism among white youth in remote rural white landscapes.

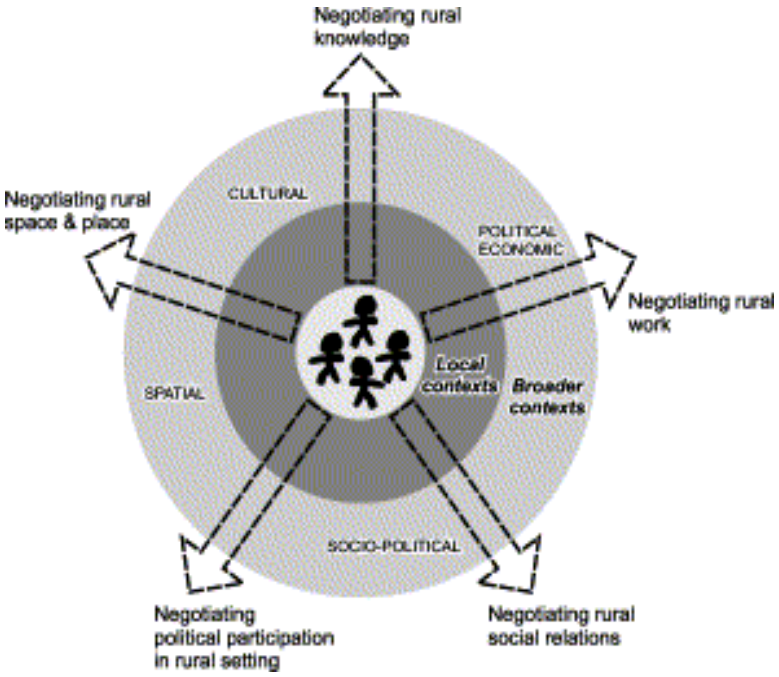
Through these authors, this section will elicit two types of denial in the understanding of minority rural youth experiences: the denial of agency and the denial of racism and difference.

Regarding the first type of denial, Panelli et al. (2007: 7) have argued that youth culture is traditionally viewed as controversial in rural landscapes, since 'daily life in rural settings can be one of living in the "village fish bowl" where behaviour of young people and youth subculture are seen as problematic and unwanted'. Thus, for rural young people to overcome discrimination by adults, they need to 'create their safe spaces and find strategies to play, work, and learn (often in overlapping ways) while situated along a continuum of agency' (Panelli et al., 2007: 223). From the absence of recognition of agency for rural young people, this thesis argues, it can plausibly be responsible for driving youth alienation in rural landscapes.

Thus, in order to refute such a prejudiced view of rural youth and address the marginalisation of rural young people, Panelli et al. urge the introduction of a theoretical

approach that recognises the dynamics of rurality and incorporates the way young people's agencies and identities are positioned within it (as seen in Fig. 1).

Fig. 1. Foci for extending rural youth scholarship



Source: Panelli, Journal of Rural Studies 18 (2002:115) 113-122

To illuminate how such an approach can be constructed, Panelli (2002: 115) suggests rural studies should follow a model as the figure above. In it rural youth are represented in the centre, at the core of the rural work, thus acknowledging the different contexts surrounding young people and how these are determining their life experiences. The figure illustrates how political, cultural, economic, and 'spatial' circumstances are 'shaping the rural environments in which young people live and that constrain and/or enable young people's lives' (ibid.). Such environments are in constant change, as environments tend to be, because the two circles represent, first, the rural world near the young person, and then the external world with its regional, national and global influences. This is an idea this study found initially helpful.

To achieve this approach, Panelli et al. (2007: 12) suggest that we need to look into 'power relations' (see also Taylor, 2004) and how they could be intertwined with young people's rural worlds, because 'approaching power as a composite dynamic enables young people to be seen simultaneously as both: subjected to, and articulating power'. Through finding the intersection between young rural life experiences and the way young people negotiate 'the politics of the rural societies' where they live, we can enhance our understanding of rural youth experiences' (2007:11).

Thus, to reach such an intersection between young people's experiences and the way they navigate issues of power, we need to comprehend how power affects and mobilises youth in rural settings. Following Matthews et al. (2000), Panelli et al. argue how power acts as a mediator of young people's rural spaces and, simultaneously, as a negotiator of their social relationships. Rural youth negotiation and management of power can be observed in their daily lives and will depend on the barriers and opportunities offered by the rural environment. In addition, power needs to be conceived not as a static but as a dynamic force and, thus, as changeable during the young person's life (ibid: 12).

Moreover, on other occasions, young people can opt to be, simultaneously, powerful and powerless (see Panelli et al., 2007: 206/207). Consequently, young people may accept being relatively powerless, or choose not to resist adults, perhaps even keeping silent, as a position not necessarily involving a negative outcome from a power standpoint. Maybe a choice of acceptance rather than confrontation can be a potential form of resilience and even resistance (Ferguson, 2003) – a perhaps conceivable response in black and minority young people's life experiences, as they oppose experiences of racism or discrimination in their rural worlds

Finally, social class becomes, for these scholars, the principle obstacle to rural young people's lives and aspirations. Thus, Panelli et al. argue that the negotiation of power is mainly grounded on the social position of the young person. This is for them a 'universal characteristic', shared by all rural young people across the world (ibid.)

The second type of denial, following Nayak's (2008) study, makes it evident that white children and youth can sustain profoundly biased conceptions of race in remote rural white areas. To confront those prejudices, Nayak suggests a pedagogical model grounded on Nash's strategy (2003) rendering the significance of genealogy on tracing ethnicity and social class. Thus, he argues encouraging teachers of white rural young people to be trained to trace their ethnic and social-class ancestry, as an effective form of dismantling whiteness and the stereotypes involved. As Nayak has explained (2008: 278):

'I found that imploding white ethnicities offered a way of contextualising anti-racism, and helped to develop an interest amongst students in race relations they felt they could have a personal stake in.'

He concludes that it would be essential for the promotion of anti-racist practices to deconstruct any identity which is considered the majority (ibid.: 280).

Nayak's pedagogical approach offers, here, the opportunity to bring awareness by exploring our ethnic origins so as to fully understand who we are. By this means a potentially monolithic vision of a Scottish culturally dominant group, within young people, could gradually be dismantled and turned into a more diverse and rich picture in which personal and familial histories and geographies could emerge and intertwine.

Given that out ethnic identities can be crucial, and this being particularly relevant in the Scottish national culture, as we saw, Nayak's approach needs to be sensitive to the context it develops. Accordingly, as even Nayak agrees, 'no strategy is likely to be completely successful'.

Nevertheless, this thesis argues, the denial of difference and the difficulties 'otherness' implies for black and minority rural youth experiences needs to be challenged. Linking with the works of Young (1990), and Cloke et al. (2006), Holloway (2007: 8), and Nayak (2008), when rurality is envisaged as spaces where difference and racism are rejected, such

denials have an explicit impact on the life experiences for black and minority young people, and particularly for those with a visible difference.

If 'rural' is imagined as 'white' and 'idyllic safe space', as mentioned by Holloway, black and, minority youth will either have no place in rural landscapes, or, at least, they will plausibly feel misrecognised and tended to be excluded. Certainly, the degree of exclusion will be mired in the salience of the visibility of the young person. For those with a more visible difference, such as skin colour or distinctive ethnicity as, for example, wearing a hijab, the likelihood of being racially targeted will increase.

In addition to the above, the denial of difference of minority rural youth is reflected in the muteness over processes of racialisation for rural young people. This silence can be followed through the absence of race within rural youth narratives as we saw in some examples (see Shucksmith, 2004; Furlong and Cartmel, 2007; Spielhofer et al., 2010, 2011among others). As Garner (2009: 19) has explained, racialisation seeks to 'chart the ways in which race is constructed and made meaningful in the context of unequal power relations'. Race, when intersecting with power, is given the significant role of providing an understanding of how racism can operate among minority youth in rural landscapes. This understanding is essential for the present thesis.

Thus, following CRT (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Delgado and Stefancic, 2006; Gillborn, 2008), given that racism is the norm, this situation will extend to rural environments, so that minority rural youth, too, will be experiencing racism and racial discrimination grounded on white privilege. Simultaneously, throughout the concept of white hierarchy, the level of racism, xenophobia and discrimination they may experience will vary according to their distance with white privilege.

Thus, considering the negative impact racism has on rural youth life experiences and aspirations, including the psychological and emotional impact on the young persons in these respects, their disadvantage in relation to local peers is clear. Furthermore, given that most youth literature exploring issues of race is located in urban settlements, this drawback

will probably affect the results when the subjects are compared with minority youth in rural settlements.

Drawing on the above, we can see that there are two main barriers for minority rural youth to surmount. First, there is the denial that they share with all rural youth: the denial of agency, which results in their alienation through issues of power and identity which arise when any young person tends to feel misrecognised and disempowered. Second, is the denial of racism and difference within rural youth experiences. How this is reflected in the lack of recognition of experiences of racism in previous rural youth works.

To conclude, as Myers and Bhopal (2015) have explained, there is a need to develop an ethical framework for schools in rural contexts. Despite race equality policies in place, the reality is that there is an 'unhealthy dominance of white privilege and White hegemonic' (2015: 17) views in most of the rural institutions, a situation potentially occurring in the Highlands. Thus, when race is not seen as a problem because, it is conveniently 'wrapped' within policies (see for example Highland Council, 2012, 2015) or an Act of Equality (2010), the 'no problems here' approach seems predominant. Instead, experiences of racism and exclusion tend to be ignored, silenced, and discarded from schools or local institutions purportedly accountable for the black and minority young people. To refute such approach, the stories told in Chapters Five and Six by young people, parents and stakeholders will, it is hoped, give a different perspective from that which commonly perceives the Highlands as romantic and idyllic.

Finally, to fully understand what is the context of the young people in this study, we will finally focus on the landscape, the place, they have encountered next.

3.4.1. Black and Minority Rural Young People in the Highlands.

As we saw before, the Highlands Council (de Lima, 2007; The Highland Council, 2012) has been attracting young people, mainly from Eastern Europe, many of whom came from

abroad with their families. Additionally, a large number of them are already back in their countries (Wishart, 2005; de Lima, 2009).

To determine what the perspectives were for the young people in near future to stay in the area, the Highland Government, in August 2009, conducted some research published in a document called 'Young People in the Highlands and Islands'. The research was a response to a double concern in the area: ageing and a limited growth in the population of the Highland, as mentioned.

Through exploring young people's lives and aspirations, two main facts emerged: one is that there is a tendency to leave the region to undertake studies beyond school. Thus, 6.3% of the population between 16-20 years old leave the region every year (Highlands and Islands Government, 2009: 25). The lack of career progression was pointed out as the main reason for this, which connects with previous literature discussed above (Spielhofer et al., 2011) and this study.

Secondly, it showed young people born there are very proud to be associated with the region despite not living there anymore. This finding has encouraged the Highland Government to develop policies to stimulate young people to stay in the area.

Yet, when referring to acceptance of difference in the area, the document shows some concern over the fact that only 35% of the local young population think 'It's OK to be different' and only 32% of the young people feel that their community values its minority communities. The document makes no specific mention at all of the young people with a black and minority background living in the Highlands. The silences may be a response to the common perception that if they do not point out differences, that is, if they are colourblind, maybe it will be the case that the minority young people are not discriminated against by the host population (see Arshad, 2005).

Looking into the above findings, it would be interesting to link them with the young people's participating in this study. In fact, the scarce evidence pertaining to minority young people in the Highlands proves the contrary. de Lima has reminded us on the state

of neglect minority youth are, with a tendency to see social homogeneity in the Highlands, as reflected in the above-mentioned document (de Lima, 2002, 2007). Research into race and racism in relation to rural youth in the area has been absent. Thus, concluding with Holloway (2007) and Donald and Gosling (1995) the view of 'No problems here' and the denial of racism or race productions seem to be the norm in the Highlands.

Finally, to close our rural context, given that the black and minority rural young people here had to negotiate issues of rurality converging with matters of youth, and all these in turn with racism and issues of race, there was a need for a model to connect all three social constructions. Thus, a model enabling intersecting youth issues. Hence, acknowledging the denial of agency, fractured transitions and the pressure from normative assumptions, and all the previous under the umbrella of neoliberal views. Simultaneously, through matters of rurality, understanding isolation, whiteness of the rural idyll and the denial of difference related to microgeographies. Finally, incorporating race, allowing racism, xenophobia and race productions to emerge.

For pursuing the above I have incorporated CRT and the framework of intersectionality, to provide sufficient critical resources to research all the social constrainers potentially shaping the life experiences of the black and minority young people living in rural environments. Thus, enabling disentangle the simultaneous convergence, as they are all interrelated, and that I will explore in the next chapter.

Conclusion

Rurality and Youth are socially constructed. This can be concluded when we follow related critical rural and youth narratives. As regards the first issue, the body of rural literature evokes rural landscapes, or rurality, as imaginary. Also, when rurality intersects with race, the rural is imagined as comprising spaces of whiteness, of purity and 'white safe', as places of sanitation, and, thus, as places where difference is denied and has no place. Consequently, the recognition of experiences of racism in rural contexts is minimal.

n addition, traditional approaches to youth have viewed young people as problematic; they have been misrecognised, excluded from decision-making, and seen through homogeneous lenses. But subsequently, through contemporary critical youth narratives, issues of power and identity have been uncovered, identifying how age has been impacting on young people's agency and life experiences; how young people have been denied agency and thus been misrecognised in their life experiences and aspirations, and regarded as passive subjects.

Finally, I have examined the way the dearth or flatness of accounts in previous works about racism and race productions, and the potential absence of effective policies acknowledging racism among rural youth, may perhaps have been having an impact on the life experiences of rural young minorities. I question here how minority youth, particularly those who are visible, and are called black in this thesis, could become part of a place: of rural landscapes – if, at any point in their lives, minority young people could ever be envisaged as being just like any other local youth in the Highlands.

If experiences of racism tend to be silenced in rural landscapes, the silences could become acuter when related to minority rural youth. Thus, when tracing the intersection of rurality with youth and race issues and how they impact on minority young people's life experiences and aspirations, I hope to illuminate the importance of introducing CRT into rural youth studies. Thus, this thesis urges to explore the impact of racism, xenophobia and racial discrimination on minority rural youth and how it can be shaping their experiences and aspirations. Indeed, by advancing intersectionality with its embedded political nature, as explained in Chapter Four, I hope to acknowledge how minority rural youth face a binary, perhaps ternary, exclusion: one related to age and implying a denial of agency, and another related to race and reflected in the denial of difference; plus those related to rurality and issues of isolation. Consequently, experiences of racism and xenophobia for a minority rural young person will be, plausibly, exacerbated in the rural environment when compared to the equivalent for their urban peers. Hence the relevance of this thesis for rural youth literature.

Accordingly, to achieve the above aims, I will expand on associated matters in the next chapter, on methodology.

4

Chapter 4: Methodology as a Political Tool: CRT and Racial Microaggressions, a Radical View in Race studies

'*Necesitamos teorias (We need theories) that will rewrite history using race, class, gender, and ethnicity as categories of analysis, theories that cross borders, that blur boundaries – new kinds of theories with new theorising methods … We are articulating a new position in the 'in-between,' borderland worlds of ethnic communities and academies … social issues such as race, class and sexual difference are intertwined with the narrative and poetic elements of a text, elements in which theory is embedded. In our "mestizaje" theories we create new categories for those of us left out or pushed out of existing ones.*'

(Anzaldúa, 1990: xxv-xxvi, quoted in Solórzano and Yosso, 2002: 23)

Introduction

In rural areas where discussions about racism tend to be silenced, and young people's voices may be undervalued or ignored even more than in urban settlements, as we previously saw, finding the right tools to give them an opportunity to be heard can become a challenging struggle. Because it resists and breaches those difficulties, this work can be considered a political endeavour. As Nairn et al. (2005: 15) suggested, any act of listening to young people is in itself a political act. If, additionally, the voices to listen to are those of young people from black and minority ethnic backgrounds, like the ones in this study, the political nature of such an act may be compounded.

Considering the above difficulties, to achieve the aim of exploring the young people's life experiences and aspirations, I will draw on CRT and Solórzano's racial microaggressions Theory as the adopted epistemology of this work. The choice has been made because CRT and the concept of racial microaggressions have helped me to make sense of my study, and to comprehend discussions of racism as well as the experiences not only of race and racism, but also of discrimination and exclusion of the young participants here. To achieve this, I will explain first what CRT signifies, what arguments it seeks to present, and some of its constituent parts, and why I have chosen CRT to guide the methodology and also the analysis of this study.

From there, this chapter will go on to reflect on the choice of Qualitative Research and the reasons for this preference: explaining how such a selection has supported the political stance of this work. Indeed, qualitative research has made easy the use not only of CRT but also of the tool of Critical Ethnography (Madison, 2005) deployed in fieldwork. This preference has provided me with the critical stance needed to develop this work consistently. First, because Critical Ethnography has facilitated adherence to the political view advanced here, and also because it has upheld a spirit of change when denying the pursuit of a positivist or objective account and aiming, together with CRT, to place this study in the realm of social justice. Lastly, I shall consider what its advantages and disadvantages could be.

Third, regarding methods, I will explain in detail the nature of the semi-structured and in-depth interviews that were chosen, the results of the interviews conducted in this work, and why they have been the preferred method here. I will discuss how the interviews were conducted and the limitations they have revealed.

Fourth, in sampling, there will be a pause to narrate the 'hard road' this study has trodden during the fieldwork to gather sufficient participants. I will recount how, despite the initially exhausting and frustrating process of recruiting the black and minority ethnic young people through positive perseverance, some audacity and patience in fieldwork proved to be essential tools for the success of this work. From there, I will explain how the choice of participants and settlements was made; and additionally, how the conjunction of

the complex nature of this research and the rural geography may explain, to a great extent, some of the difficulties experienced in the sampling.

Fifth, this chapter will look into the process of data analysis and how it has been conducted: how this happened with support from the work of Saldaña (2009), as pivotal for establishing the codes and categories needed for the analysis presented in this study.

Last but not least, this chapter will examine the concepts of trustworthiness, authenticity, ethics and reflexivity and relate them to this study, questioning all these concepts through the critical lens so essential to this work.

4.1. What is CRT doing here? The Epistemological sense of CRT

As we saw briefly in Chapter Two, CRT has been defined as the theoretical lens that acknowledges that racism and issues of race are the norm in our societies (Essed, 1991; Ladson-Billings, 1995, 1999; Tate, 1997). As Ladson-Billings (1999: 9) has argued, 'race is always already present in every social configuring of our lives'. Indeed, Roediger (1991: 6) has explained how race is always omnipresent regardless of the lack of 'difference' within our societies. He states: 'even in an all-white town, race was never absent'. Roediger's words hit the 'bulls-eye' of our rural study here, since race and, more particularly, white ethnicities are still unproblematised in most rural geographies in Scotland (Cloke, 1997: 199; de Lima, 2008). As de Lima explained, 'the invisibility of whiteness as an ethnic signifier, the conflation of ethnicity with people of colour … has also led to rendering minority ethnic groups invisible in rural communities' (2008: 44). Thus, de Lima highlights two important ideas here: the invisibility of minorities in rural landscapes and the common absence of questioning white ethnicity as another skin colour: a 'signifier'. Following de Lima's idea, given that this study takes place in a context with

a white majority, the significance of white colour is undeniable and one that needs to be problematised in rural landscapes, as we saw in Chapter Three.

Despite race discourses in the UK (for example, Bonilla Silva, 2006; Anthias et al., 2005; Solomos, 1996, 2003; Miles, 1989) having traditionally agreed that racism should be at the core of race theory and the focus of race studies, race theory has been criticised for abiding in the realm of ideology and not making the transition into the arena of effective and compelling praxis (see Gilroy, 1992), even undergoing a process of 'laundering of race' in English sociology departments (Meer, 2015: 2229). As Meer (ibid.) has complained with good cause, given the silences over 'race and empire' in the current Scottish independence debate, it would be reasonable to ponder whether current race discourse is providing minority communities and individuals with sufficient confidence and support to promote and advance their rights in Scotland.

Thus, the translation CRT has undertaken from the legal context into the field of education, thanks to the initial efforts of Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995), the above demand has been gradually emerging. When four years later, Ladson-Billings wrote 'Just what is critical race theory and what's it doing in a nice field like education', she warned that adopting a theoretical CRT framework for a study could be challenging. She made explicit that, no matter how exciting and powerful the use of CRT might be, it requires 'intense study and careful rethinking of race and education', because we, as CRT researchers, will be placed in uncomfortable positions as we expose racism in education and suggest radical and, perhaps, unpopular, solutions to it (Ladson-Billings, 1999: 22).

Drawing on the above, it is undeniable that CRT and its focused and radical lens has made possible an open dialogue on racism, xenophobia and racial discrimination in this study. It has done so, firstly, by standing within a clear anti-racist position and not engaging with concepts of neutrality and objectivity, but rather permitting this work to set aside positivist stances (see for example Parker et al., 1999; Parker and Lynn, 2002). Second, it has focused on research as an act of social justice and solidarity with marginalised and disenfranchised groups.

To achieve the above aims, I needed to update and adjust the terminology used by CRT in order to encompass the stories of the young people participating here so that they can be heard. For example, instead of using the term 'students of colour' or 'people of colour' used by Solórzano and Yosso, and CRT authors across the Atlantic, I have adopted the expressions 'black and minority rural young people' or 'rural minority young people' to refer to all young participants in this study. Here, 'black', or 'visible' young people, are represented by those from Black-African, Black-Caribbean or Chinese and Asian backgrounds as I explained in Chapter 1 (p.27); while the 'invisible', or 'white', members in this study are epitomised by Eastern and Southern European young people. Hence, the term 'minority ethnic' include those from mixed marriages, and up to a first generation. Accordingly, for full understanding of this methodology it is essential to clarify these changes I have introduced into CRT.

In doing so, I will argue here the need I encountered to 'turn CRT up a notch' and to try to link such enhancement with current rural youth discourses, highlighting the necessity of including race issues, racism and xenophobia accountancies in rural youth literature.

Consequently, for pursuing the above, this contribution extends also to incorporating a framework enabling covert forms or racism, xenophobia and racial discrimination to emerge. Through, Solórzano's 'racial microaggressions theory' (2000), as a research tool, expressions of racism, xenophobia and racial discrimination as, for example, racial jokes in school, introduces a new dimension into the race discussion. Such examples which, perhaps, have been taken for granted in previous studies, as we will explore next.

4.1.1. Racial Microaggressions

The concept of racial microaggressions is a theoretical tool for critical race research, and has proved useful for exploring further race, racism and racial discrimination in people's everyday experiences (see Pérez Huber and Solórzano, 2015: 298). Racial microaggressions theory has been extended to the covert experiences of racism and racial discrimination of any minorities in their interaction with the mainstream society (Young, 1990).

Through the works of Solórzano (1998), Solórzano and Yosso (2000), Solórzano et al. (2002), Sue et al. (2007), and Kohli and Solórzano (2012), racial microaggressions have been defined as:

'Brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioural, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory or negative racial slights and insults toward people of color'. (Sue et al., 2007: 271)

It is a term coined by Pierce et al. in 1978, referring to racial microaggressions as 'subtle, stunning, often automatic, and non-verbal exchanges which are "put downs" of blacks by offenders' (1978: 66). Racial microaggressions coincide with Essed's theory of 'everyday racism' (1991) in highlighting the emotional damage to the racialised victims caused by the persistent 'drop drop' of manifestations in everyday experience of subtle, covert racism and racial discrimination. The demonstrations are perhaps imperceptible for the perpetrator but inflict obvious damage on the victim, the black and minority ethnic people who experience it on a regular basis.

Davis (1989: 1576), following Pierce, defined it as 'stunning, automatic acts of disregard that stem from unconscious attitudes of white superiority and constitute a verification of black inferiority'.

Thus, the novelty of racial microaggressions theory is that it incorporates expressions of racism and racial exclusion that were probably overlooked by previous race research,as mentioned (Kohli and Solórzano, 2012) in which they were ignored and absent. In a work called 'Teachers, please learn our names!: racial microaggressions and the K-12 classroom', Kohli and Solórzano elucidate how teachers who don't engage with the pronunciation of their pupils' names are having a continuing impact on the self-esteem of the children. As an example, the authors present the case of a 10-year-old in East Los Angeles in 1960. The boy was from a Mexican background and was brought up to love the Spanish language and the culture of his country. The boy used Spanish in public and certainly at school. The name of the boy was Freddie Galan; his classmates 'would pronounce his name as "Gallon" – like a gallon of milk'. Freddie hated this and confronted his peers, responding to them with a furious explanation of how to pronounce his name

correctly in Spanish, which was the way his parents addressed him. His attitude of standing up to and resisting the mispronunciation of his name was uncommon (Kohli and Solórzano, 2012: 442). Freddy's story illustrates a common experience for many schools in rural Scotland with black and minority ethnic children and young people, where there is a majority of white pupils who can speak no language other than English. Those whose mother tongue differs from English tend to undergo regular encounters with racial microaggressions, as we will see through the stories of the young people in chapter five.

Thus, the psychological and emotional impact of racism and race productions has been considered crucial in this thesis. This is because racism and racial microaggressions can impinge on the self-esteem and well-being of the victims, as this study will demonstrate. Indeed, when Solórzano explores in his work the experiences of race and gender microaggressions towards Latino academics in 1998, he recounts the psychological consequences of daily encounters, this time including his own, with racism, and explains how 'racism disempowers us by inflecting individual consciousness with self-doubt'. Thus, his theory uncovers issues of race power emanating from acts of subtle racism on the part of people with white privilege: elusive acts of minor racial aggression that have the damaging consequences of undermining the self-confidence, self-esteem and perhaps even the health of the victims.

To conclude, Solórzano's theory has also been extremely helpful as conceptual support providing understanding of the psychological and emotional effects that racism, xenophobia and racial discrimination can have on the victims in Scotland (see Weishaar, 2008),

4.1.2. Defining Racism for this Thesis

Given that rural landscapes, and particularly the Highlands, are mainly white, we can see, following CRT, that racism and racial discrimination are taking place even in all-white areas, as rural ones can be.

Additionally, Garner's (2006) idea of white hierarchy will have the effect of enabling experiences of racial discrimination over difference to be heard, this time in the voices of some of the 'white other', or 'invisible', young people in this study. Even more, the recognition of a white hierarchy will take the discussion of whiteness further when, for example, a young person potentially embracing the 'denial of difference', as previously mentioned by Philo (1992, 1993) and Cloke (2006: 379) in Chapter Three, could unconsciously have acquired an excellent resource with which to avoid exclusion in the rural community.

Thus, for the purpose of this thesis, racism is defined as an act of dominance, exploitation, exclusion and discrimination used to oppress and undermine the black young people in this study. Whilst xenophobia is the preferred term applied to white minorities. The last can be on grounds of colour or ethnicity or both. The distinction, as we mentioned, lies in the fact that experiences of racism towards black, visible young people transcend time. Consequently, racism is systemic (Feagin, 2006) for those minorities who have distinctive physical features different from white, whereas for invisible minorities, for example Eastern Europeans, the experience of dominance and exclusion will vanish as eventually, perhaps in a second or third generation, the people are woven into and included within the mainstream white society, as we saw in Chapter Two.

In addition, the fact that CRT posits race studies as occupying the arena of social justice has encouraged the questioning here of the study's methodology, by asking: how should I proceed with the black and minority young people I am researching in order to better understand them? – and of its epistemology, by asking: what specific knowledge should be sought in relation to this particular group that I am exploring (Parker and Lynn, 2002)? Both questions needed to be taken into consideration if I wanted to engage in social justice using CRT. Consequently, as a researcher adopting an explicit CRT stance, I position myself as questioning prevalent structures, i.e. challenging orthodoxies and particularly those that restrict discussions about racism, racial inequalities and discrimination. Hence, the methodological approaches and the analytical lens that have been negotiated have not followed conventional research practices. Indeed, I have felt comfortable with a theoretical model that has asked me, as the researcher, to problematise and challenge established practices. This position has helped in bringing out themes in my analysis and also in

presenting any recommendations for action, for change, and for transformation, when necessary.

To fully comprehend the theoretical framework used in this thesis I will next explain the five posits or tenets that CRT is based on.

4.1.3. CRT's five tenets

CRT is grounded on five tenets. First, racism is assumed to be a natural feature, deeply entrenched in the social structures and, therefore, often socially taken for granted. As a consequence, it can operate in a non-explicit manner, first being rendered socially invisible and then silenced as a result of its invisibility. Hence, CRT authors argue for the importance of revealing how race inequality operates and how racism is perpetuated through unfair political and social structures that have historically privileged some groups over others. That is how, for example, CRT could incorporate the term 'institutional racism' into legal documents (Delgado and Stefancic, 2001, 2006).

Indeed, what are seen as average, common, and apparently just social circumstances are in fact the result of inequitable policies favouring the majority 'white' population over the minority on grounds of race and ethnicity. This is how racism is persistently reproduced and 'can be evidenced in the outcome of processes and relations irrespective of intent' (Rollock and Gillborn, 2011: 3).

The second tenet is the idea of white supremacy or what we have seen of white privilege: that is, how the structural reproduction of race inequality advances some races over others and as a result privileges white people. This is a key idea within CRT for understanding racism and how it operates, exposing how what is seen as socially normative needs to be opened up to discussion and questioned; otherwise racism is daily regenerated through institutions and social interaction.

Thus, the notion of whiteness needs to be problematised to fully understand current race productions and racism. As a consequence of this tenet, CRT has made possible the emergence of whiteness studies, which we have discussed before.

Third, CRT introduces the concept of 'Interest Convergence'. This is explained in Bell's work (1980: 523) when he argues that 'the interest of blacks in achieving racial equality will be accommodated only when it converges with the interests of whites'. Thus we can understand how racism perpetuates and sustains White Supremacy, with some insignificant advances for black people allowed to occur only when accompanied by economic conditions that ultimately favour the dominant whites. However, such apparent progress towards race equality is, in fact, an illusion. Delgado and Stefancic (2001) and Gillborn (2008) argue that 'in reality there is little long-lasting change or improvement in life chances for racially minoritised groups' (Rollock and Gillborn, 2011: 4).

Fourth, CRT initially addresses the voices and life experiences of black and visible minorities, identified by CRT author Delgado (1989) as 'people of color': the voices of the marginalised minority, who normally are not listened to; it relates how black people in the UK perceive their encounter with racism within a racist society and, therefore, contribute with their discernment through counter-narrative and storytelling (Solórzano and Yosso, 2002; Bell, 2010).

Counter-storytelling (see Delgado and Stefancic, 2006) or counter-narrative refers to stories told by the marginalised, the unheard. They are what quantitative studies call 'the outliers': those who are at the margins and are never or seldom represented in statistics. Their stories, thus, 'counter' official accounts of their life experiences. As Delgado and Stefancic have argued, counter-storytelling is not an imaginary narrative invented by researchers, but a methodological tool allowing one to hear the voices of the disaffected, those whose voices have not been recognised.

It is by means of counter-stories that CRT has disentangled issues of power through intersectionality, an idea that we will unpack next. Thus, the theoretical support that CRT

gives to narratives has created a helpful analytical framework within educational research (Solórzano and Yosso, 2002) which questions, for example, the concept of 'educational attainment' by making it possible to hear alienated or new voices: in the present study, to hear the hitherto largely unheard voices of black and minority young people in rural areas. This will be expanded on in the methodology outlined in this chapter.

Finally, CRT's awareness of the way racial inequality is reproduced through social structures and settings does not lead to neglect of other forms of social oppression. CRT's understanding of power relations, drawing on Critical Theory's intersection of race, law and power, has focused on the diverse ways black people and visible minority ethnic populations have been traditionally discriminated against and marginalised as a group through unfair legislation privileging white people. Through intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989), CRT transcends earlier CT which analyses social issues separately and independently.

Consequently, the interdisciplinary and political nature of this thesis required the framework of intersectionality to enable the different social constrainers to converge or intersect. To achieve this, CRT has allowed intersectionality (Crenshaw et al., 1989) to act as the discourse that disentangles issues of power along lines of race, age and geography by advancing narratives and counter-stories told by the young participants of this study, as we will see in the coming sections.

4.1.4. Intersectionality: a political framework

Intersectionality (see, for example, Parker and Lynn, 2002; Solórzano and Yosso, 2002; McCall, 2005; Davis, 2008; Bilge, 2010) is the framework for a transdisciplinary theory aiming to encompass the complexity of social inequalities and identities through an integrated approach. Thus, it confutes and overcomes traditional social theories grounded on a hierarchisation and division of the 'great axes of social differentiation through categories of gender/sex, class, race, ethnicity, disability and sexual orientation' (Bilge,

2010: 58). Consequently, within CRT's recognition, through intersectionality, of complex and multiple forms of structural and institutional racism, it has been possible to look inside and decipher the social constrainers of the young people's stories presented here.

Intersectionality aims necessarily at seeing how diverse forms and expressions of domination, oppression or discrimination are overlapping or intersecting within the same person. Through adopting feminist methodology (Mies, 1983) and postmodern scholarship (Foucault, 1988; Bourdieu, 1979; Young, 1990), intersectionality has made it possible to acknowledge that every person has more than a simple and singular identity (Bhopal and Preston, 2012). For intersectionality, all social inequalities operate at simultaneous levels and are shaped by one another, being mutually co-constitutive. Accordingly, through an intersectional framework, racism cannot be seen independently, but is interrelated, in our case, with rural and youth matters and also with class and gender. For example, to fully understand the racialisation of the black and minority rural young people in this study, as a researcher, I need to investigate how racialisation operates, what the social processes and representations around race are, and how they are shaped by age, place and, additionally, by agency, gender and class.

Thus, for the purpose of this thesis, intersectionality can be defined as the methodological lens making possible the convergence of numerous issues of social oppression, here being: race, age and geography, together with agency, gender and class, in one young person.

The term intersectionality was originally coined by Crenshaw in 1989 when she introduced it as a theory addressing black women's oppression. Crenshaw (1989) argued that a complex and myriad set of oppressions can converge simultaneously in the same individual, incorporating the idea that all social matters are interconnected at a deeper level in every human being. It was a time when the struggle of women of colour was misrecognised, absent and lost in the social discussions between anti-racist and feminist discourses. Hill Collins (2000: 252, 297) was the first black feminist theoretician to refer to intersectionality, although it was Hancock who suggested expressing it as a paradigm (Bilge, 2010: 59).

Today it is a highly valued concept and applied to further categories in social studies. As Davis (2008: 67) has explained, it is currently 'heralded as one of the most important contributions to feminist scholarship', a view supported by McCall (2005: 1771), who argues that intersectionality 'is the most important contribution that women's studies have made so far'.

For McCall (ibid.: 1790), the plethora of old and new studies in social sciences do not contemplate the whole diverse and 'complex intersectionalities that are so much a part of systemic inequalities' within contemporary societies. Thus, she argues, there is a disconnect between theory and social reality in social methodological discourses, rendering them unable to 'fully grasp the current context of complex inequality' (ibid.: 1790). Consequently, because of the introduction of intersections of structural inequalities, women's studies need to be held to a 'higher standard' (ibid.).

It is argued that the reason for the success of intersectionality lies in the uncertainties and ambiguities it generates. As Davis explains, she believes that, instead of providing solutions for sorting the ambiguity, 'paradoxically, precisely the vagueness and open-endedness of intersectionality may be the very secret to its success' (Davis, 2008: 69).

The sense of confusion or ambiguity that intersectionality seems to generate is also reflected in scholars' discussions about whether it is a theory or simply a concept, i.e. a 'heuristic device'; or perhaps a reading approach to adopt when undertaking feminist analysis.

Undoubtedly, the vague and 'open-ended' character of intersectionality is, in fact, helpful in our research. This is because it promotes flexibility and, thus, imagination. The originality emerges, as Davis states, in the world around us, which tends to be more complex and contradictory than we could ever have expected. Consequently, intersectionality 'stimulates our creativity in looking for new and unorthodox ways of doing feminist analysis' (ibid.: 79). What could be a potential weakness in a concept, is, surprisingly, what has positioned intersectionality to become so successful. Davis has made it clear: 'it is precisely the concept's alleged weaknesses – its ambiguity and open-endedness – that were the secrets to its success' (ibid.: 67).

For Knudsen (2006: 73, 74), the concept of intersectionality 'and the analysis of interacting socio-cultural categories and identities have the aim to achieve more democracy and equality without doing them mainstreamed and new normalising'. Thus, following Knudsen, intersectionality can be used to analyse changes, fluctuations and social processes. Its focus on the marginalised and the oppressed, including minority communities and cultures, as normally unheard, makes it the ideal framework for this work. It also concentrates on analysing normalisation, questioning in what form and how normality is constructed and constantly perpetuated. Consequently, in research, intersectionality may be used to deconstruct any social normalisation and homogenisation: to explore how, as shown in this study, race, including whiteness, rurality and youth, are constructed. The aim is to deconstruct the normality of any of the social barriers impacting on the life experiences and aspirations of the young people here, and to show what issues of power are emerging for the young people (ibid.).

Furthermore, CRT validates intersectionality as being also the discourse bringing awareness of issues of inter and intra group power, and thus contributing by identifying, for example, how these power relations operate in people's experiences, . As Crenshaw (1991: 1299) has argued: 'Through an awareness of intersectionality, we can better acknowledge and ground the differences among us and negotiate the means by which these differences will find expression in constructing group politics'.

Drawing on the above, this will mean that intersectionality has helped to disentangle the experiences of the minority young people, focusing on race and racism, geography and age, and acknowledging their gender and class, thus showing how life experiences will not be the same across the eight young participants. Intersectionality will explain and analyse, for example, how the perception of racism will not be similar for two visible young females, despite being siblings, in the same rural remote community. Nor will the experience undergone and its aftermath, in relation to difference and discrimination, have an equal impact for two mixed male and female siblings in an accessible town. Ultimately, the use of intersectionality has enabled engagement with the complexity and the contested nature of this work, something that unfortunately the older Critical theory or Critical multiculturalism could not assist me with.

However, to conclude, it is important to acknowledge here, from a critical standpoint, the recent 'trendy' overuse of intersectionality in current social works. As Bilge (2013: 405) argues, intersectionality is currently undergoing a dangerous process of depoliticisation through its use by 'a specifically academic feminism in tune with the neoliberal knowledge economy'. The deployment of such questionable perspectives reshapes and erodes its original political aim derived from black feminism. She believes current trends need to be debated and questioned to counterbalance the negative effect they have on what intersectionality was meant to be: 'feminists of color confronting racism within feminism' (Bilge, 2013: 420). This thesis, agreeing with Bilge, aims to share a politicising use of intersectionality that acknowledges intersectionality's original purposes, stemming from black feminism, when promoting transformation and social justice. Thus, this study commits to eluding potential white ethnocentric and neoliberal views as those denounced by Bilge in relation to white feminists.

Finally, for this study to completely achieve the necessary awareness and deconstruction of the young people's normalisation and homogenisation of their life experiences, I needed to incorporate a tool that facilitated active listening to their experiences and aspirations. This tool is the most significant element of this thesis as it has provided the chance, within this research, to listen to the voices of the marginalised and the disenfranchised. This essential tool is counter-storytelling.

4.1.5. Counter-storytelling or narratives: an essential tool for the disenfranchised

Critical Race Theory scholars have disputed traditional methodologies on the grounds that they needed to promote 'theories of social transformation where knowledge is generated specifically for the purpose of addressing and ameliorating conditions of oppression, poverty, or deprivation' (Lincoln, 1993: 33).

When applying Critical Race methodology to education, they have asked whose stories are privileged in educational institutions and whose stories are marginalised. Challenging the normalisation surrounding any disenfranchised group, which minority rural young people are, we need to use a tool that draws on the knowledge of the minority young people who are traditionally excluded. Thus, critical race methodology provides an unconventional and creative tool: counter-storytelling. Counter-storytelling counters the normalised, traditional and official stories we have heard about the marginalised, in this case these minority young people in rural communities (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994).

Hence, counter-storytelling appeared as an alternative discourse, consisting of listening to and understanding the life experiences of those who have been epistemologically silenced, disempowered and marginalised (see Solórzano and Yosso, 2000). When Warmington (2012: 6), quoting Solórzano and Yosso, defined counter-story as 'a method of telling the stories of those people whose experiences are not often told … a tool for exposing, analysing, and challenging the majoritarian stories of racial privilege', he was arguing for recognition of the importance of voice in race discussions, and specifically, of how counter-stories have proved to be an essential tool for allowing the voices of the racially marginalised to speak for themselves.

Indeed, as Solórzano and Yosso (2002) have argued, there is a substantial absence of discussion of racism in official discourses, starting with academic forums. As Anzaldúa (1990) explained:

'Theory is a set of knowledges. Some of these knowledges have been kept away from us mainly because – entry into some professions and academia is denied to us. Because we are not allowed to enter discourse, because we are often disqualified and excluded from it, because what passes for theory these days is a forbidden territory for us, it is vital that we occupy theorising space, that we do not allow whitemen and women solely to occupy it. By bringing in our approaches and methodologies, we transform those theorising spaces'. (Anzaldúa, 1990: xxv)

Anzaldúa, when using the word 'us', referred to the experiences of exclusion she perceived in the construction of social theory among minority scholars in the USA. Her aim of transformation, of breaching what is the norm, can only be achieved by challenging the existing theories and methodological practices that characterise our academic contexts.

Following Anzaldúa, Solórzano and Yosso have added that, in the same way as minority communities have been disempowered by theory, they can also gain and be empowered by theories. Accordingly, if methodologies have normally been used to silence and marginalise minorities, then equally they 'can also give voice and turn the margins into places of transformative resistance' (Solórzano and Delgado Bernal, 2001; Solórzano and Yosso, 2002).

Consequently, when incorporating the methodological tool of counter-storytelling or narratives, this thesis, through CRT, has employed a political tool. It has done so when it has facilitated listening to the long unheard voices of the black and minority young people here. The acknowledgement CRT gives to structural and institutionalised racism, applied in this case to the sphere of education, helps us recognise how racism and racial discrimination can be responsible for shaping the young people's life experiences, their aspirations and opportunities. This is seen not only in the micro picture of the interpersonal behaviour, everyday interaction and participation of the young person, but also in the macro picture of policies, institutional practices and services provided for young people, among others (Housee, 2012). The first perspective, the micro picture, has been crucial when analysing the young people's experiences in the Highlands in Chapter Five. The second perspective has been essential when exploring institutional actors in depth through the stakeholders' interviews and discussion in Chapter Six.

Thus, narratives and counter-storytelling have been paramount windows on the young people's realities. Through counter-stories this thesis has been provided with sufficient resources to illustrate, at the hand of the young participants and their documented stories, the acts of discrimination and marginalisation they may have encountered. Furthermore, counter-stories are intended to help readers understand better (see Ladson-Billings, 2006),

through their narratives, the covert or institutional, as well as overt, racism that these young people have encountered in their rural lives.

To conclude, the use of counter-storytelling thanks to CRT has, therefore, allowed the positioning of race and racism at the epicentre of this work and against any general and common assumption that perceives racism as consisting of isolated acts performed by individuals. On the contrary, following CRT's first tenet we saw that 'racism is ordinary, not aberrational – "normal science", the usual way society does business, the common, everyday experience of most people of color but as a natural feature that happens every day' (Delgado and Stefancic, 2006: 3) has been crucial for elucidating the young people's stories.

Thus, this being a political work, as it aims at transformation, I will next explain fully why I have opted for this thesis to be a qualitative research study.

4.2. Why a Qualitative Study?

Bryman has defined qualitative research as 'a research strategy that usually emphasizes words rather than quantifications' (Bryman, 2008b: 366). For Denzin and Lincoln (2011: 3), qualitative research is regarded as a 'situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible'. Hammersley (2013: 12) views qualitative research as 'a form of social inquiry that tends to adopt a flexible and data-driven research design, to use relatively unstructured data to emphasize the essential role of subjectivity in the research process, to study a small number of naturally occurring cases in detail, and to use verbal rather than statistical forms of analysis'.

For the purposes of this thesis, qualitative research can be defined as the process of fieldwork and analysis that has facilitated the use of CRT to place race and racism at the

core of the analysis, acknowledging the intersection of race with youth and geography. As I am interested in counter-storytelling, thus, the qualitative method had a better fit to my epistemological lens of CRT and Racial Microaggressions.

Given the complexity arising from the intersection of race, youth and rural issues, the set of practices Denzin and Lincoln have referred to – at least some of them, if not all – have provided an excellent prescription for this work. Such practices are translated into an array of representations, running from interviews, field notes, conversations, and observations, to photographs, among other research options, inferring that, to acquire a better understanding of the subject of study, qualitative research needs to deploy a wide range of connected interpretive practices.

In addition, when Bryman emphasises the significant role of words in qualitative research, in opposition to the figures of a potential quantitative study, he brings to this work the opportunity to introduce counter-storytelling and narratives as the preferred methodological tool. It is through the acknowledgement of the young participants' storytelling that we can reach their lived experiences from each young person's perspective.

Consequently, when Hammersley (2013: 12) refers to qualitative fieldwork as that which brings a 'deeper understanding of the sample it studies', his words connect with the aim of this study. He also has contrasted quantitative and qualitative research and identified certain characteristics of qualitative studies which it will be helpful to explain with reference to this study.

To begin with, there is the fact that qualitative research is focused on capturing – or trying to capture – subjectivity; this is drawn from interpretivism. The ways this character of qualitative research constitutes a significant link with CRT are fourfold.

First, the subjectivity of qualitative research is found in the fact that every research project will be moulded by the personal and social characteristics of the researcher. This subjectivity needs to be acknowledged in every study and a position around it looked for.

For example, providing enough information about myself and the process of the research will allow readers to evaluate any effects of these factors on this research. Overall, there is always a fear of subjectivity obscuring the validity of analysis, out of the logical concern to attain the objectivity that requires researchers to evaluate and test any possible threat to the authenticity of their conclusions. Nevertheless, with the aim of avoiding any attempt at neutrality in this study, this work has deeply engaged with the terminology related to CRT and the anti-racist discourse in the UK, such as, minority ethnic, black, racism, racial microaggressions, discrimination, marginalisation, alienation and any term related to a potential experience of oppression for minority youth. These are going to be used continuously throughout this work.

Second, through CRT work I am also aware of my privilege of whiteness and the 'fallacy of empathy' (Delgado and Stefancic, 2006), with reference to how white researchers may interact with the young black and minority people I interview. Thus I needed to understand that the distinctive experience of racism will never be the same for a black person as for a white; and additionally, that through a contingent hierarchy of whiteness (Garner, 2006) there will be dissimilar and gradual experiences of racial discrimination for white minorities. Third, I stand on a ground of experience as a practitioner, having been a secondary teacher for black and minority young people for nearly thirty years. It is central to this research that I have witnessed persistent unfair conditions imposed on them by institutions and other practitioners, resulting in feelings of distress, and triggering a sincere wish on my part to make a difference for them through further knowledge and research. Fourth, this work reflects a political concern, since I have been involved in the struggles of marginalised and deprived minority groups from an early age.

In addition, Hammersley refers to a small number of cases studied, making it possible to proceed with few interviews and to achieve the in-depth analysis aimed at. This has brought the opportunity to give every case the attention it requires and to reflect on the complexity of each one. That would have been impossible to achieve with questionnaires.

Next, the character of flexibility is visible in many aspects of qualitative research such as its methods or its data analysis process. Flexibility in research diverges from quantitative categories which are recognised as constituting a mutually exclusive and exhaustive set. In

the case of this study, flexibility has made it possible to develop a research model allowing me to look into race issues among rural youth in the Highlands. Moreover, regarding relatively unstructured data, the use here of semi-structured interviews as the method has brought the opportunity to let the participants flow in their responses and to create new questions around them for this study. That freedom of structure, together with flexibility, has helped to enrich the result of the interviews with the participants' knowledge, obtained through their responses.

To finish, and connecting with Bryman's work, the verbal rather than statistical analysis of data when interpreting through the CRT lens is at the core of qualitative research, and that is backed up with related examples. Indeed, qualitative research, by contrast with quantitative studies, does not translate aspects of the world into numbers to be analysed mathematically but offers the flexibility to look at the world through the lens the researcher brings to bear on the data. Given the contested and complex nature of this research, it would be difficult to explain how I could have listened to and understood painful experiences connected with race and racism through cold and aseptic surveys or questionnaires.

Also, by intersecting with Youth Studies, this work has gained authority from the knowledge needed to analyse black and minority young people's life experiences, contributing the lens that illuminates wider understanding of them. For example, it acknowledges the lack of recognition and agency of young people in current societies, the difficulty of listening to their voices, and a tendency towards homogenisation or neglect of their experiences (Wyn, 1997; Furlong and Cartmel, 2006; Heath et al., 2009). It shows how this deficit in previous research has been reflected in the absence of young people's voices, which has had an especial impact on rural areas (de Lima, 2007). Finally, through postmodern lenses, we consider the discourse on geography and rurality (Jedrej and Nuttall, 1996; de Lima, 2001a; Neal and Agyeman, 2006; Hopkins, 2007). Rurality places race in space and provides the context of this research, helping us to understand further the actual experiences of the black and minority young people who are the subjects of this work.

To conclude, as Parker and Lynn (2002: 12) have argued: 'CRT has important implications for qualitative research, particularly in education and youth culture'. Thus, qualitative research, in connection with CRT, has provided the necessary epistemological and

methodological tools for exploring the discriminatory practices and racism observed in educational policies and/or practitioners imposed on the minority rural young people here. Thus, the choice of qualitative research has been a natural and indispensable one for accomplishing the aims of this work.

Finally, following the display of practices necessary for qualitative research, as mentioned by Denzin and Lincoln, the researcher can become what Solórzano (1998) and Kincheloe (2005) have described as a bricoleur or jack-of-all-trades. This versatility of the researcher emerges when we use any technique at hand to reach the subject or subjects to be studied: something that was necessary for this work when incorporating critical ethnography as the necessary fieldwork tool for this study, as I will explain next.

4.2.1. Critical Ethnography: a useful tool for fieldwork

If critical ethnography (see Thomas, 1993; Carspecken, 1996; Madison, 2005) has been the preferred tool for fieldwork in this study, it is for two reasons: first, to connect the fieldwork practice with the critical lenses; and second, to fulfil this study's aim of contributing to 'emancipatory knowledge and discourses of social justice' (Madison, 2005: 6). The choice of critical ethnography was made to ensure that the issues of voice, injustice, discrimination, marginalisation, status and identity of the black and minority ethnic young people discussed here were addressed.

Critical ethnography is rooted in anthropology and the Chicago school of Sociology which was active during the first half of the twentieth century (Bryman, 2012). Beyond conventional ethnographic works, in which the field targeted used to be exotic places, critical ethnographers would look into marginalised and deprived human environments which were far from exotic. Indeed, critical ethnographers will consciously venture to conduct research on so-called 'suppressed or deviant groups', outside the paradigm of hegemonic cultural positioning or mainstream culture. That approach provided new ideas for dissent and dialogue on societal transformation and issues that needed further attention, discussion, and acknowledgement in deprived communities (ibid., 2005).

Thus, critical ethnography has contributed enough to the methodological ethos to fulfil the aim of placing this work in the arena of social justice. In fact, it is by refusing to produce a descriptive work that we enhance the chances of making a difference in our societies through research (Dentin, 1989). The distinction between modern and old ethnographic works here results from rejecting the aim of neutrality and value-free positivist stances found in previous research and, therefore, incorporating critical lenses into the research process.

Consequently, this study is positioned within a sphere of 'resisting domestication'. By that is meant that as a researcher I will use any ‘resources, skills and privileges available ... to make accessible – to penetrate the borders and break through the confines in defence of – the voices and experiences of subjects whose stories are otherwise restrained and out of reach’ (Madison, 2005: 5).

The restrained stories here are those of the young people and are simultaneously impregnated with the ‘silences’ surrounding them and found in the fieldwork. Thus, a critical look is called upon to explore the possible reasons for those persistent ‘silences’ that I have come across: silences that emerged, first, during the process of gathering participants and later, when inquiring about matters of race and ethnicity among the rural youth community that was targeted.

Thanks to the deployment of any resources, skills and privileges possible and available, I finally turned this approach into a reality, a matter I will expand upon when explaining sampling.

Thus, critical ethnography could be defined here as the methodological tool that has made possible the exploration, through a critical lens, of a small and marginalised group of young people living in a rural area. This was done with the aim of introducing a change in their status quo by using the opportunity, through research, to raise issues of social injustice and silences surrounding them.

However, critical ethnography has its limitations. Hammersley has questioned in his work (2001) how positivist and postmodern stances challenge the 'validity' of its results, a term that is made problematic in this study and discussed later on. Could it be that, because as a researcher I have positioned myself to impose a critical lens, this stance may obscure, distort or blur the voices of the young people I have researched? How might my political partiality, as a researcher, have impacted on this study?

Finally, critical ethnography has enabled taking Notes at Fieldwork as an additional reflective tool (see Notes from fieldwork. Appendix 3, p. 247).

4.3. Research Question

In order to meet the target of this study the research question has been:

What are the life experiences and aspirations of black and minority ethnic young people in the Scottish Highlands?

To assist in answering this, some subsidiary questions have been asked:

1. How does secondary education shape the life experiences and aspirations of black and minority ethnic young people in the Scottish Highlands?
2. How do service providers support and assist the young people through their rural life experiences and in achieving their life aspirations?
3. What are the policies on race equality in the Scottish Highlands, and how do they relate to these young people's experiences?

4.4. Methods

To address the last research question this study has used:

4.4.1. Desk-based analysis:

- of literature related to the three areas of the social issues of this study: race, youth and rurality.
- of national and local policies on race equality as relevant to education in the Highlands, Scotland.
- of the influence of key pieces of legislation, e.g. Equality plan: a Fairer Highland - 2012-1017; ASL Act (2013), 2010 (2004); the Equality Act 2010; as well as the Macpherson Report.
- of national and local policies on the curriculum (e.g. Curriculum for Excellence), learning and teaching since devolution, and their recognition of matters related to race equality in particular.

Then to address the first two questions I have used:

Individual semi-structured interviews:

- with black and minority ethnic young people.
- with key stakeholders: parents, ESOL teacher, career advisor,
- with academic contributors.

Finally, I have completed my methods with the use of:

- Notes from fieldwork.

Thus, facilitating incorporation of the field notes, elaborated on with reflections during the time of the fieldwork of this study (see Appendix 3, p. 359).

4.4.2. Individual semi-structured interviews

For Kvale and Brinkmann (2009: 3) ‘an interview is a conversation that has a structure and a purpose’. It goes beyond an informal chat. The primary task of interviewing is to understand the meaning of what the interviewees say.

Coming back to Madison (2005: 25), when she conceptualises interviews she draws on the works of Rubin and Rubin (1995) and claims, ‘interviewing is a hallmark experience of fieldwork research’. She argues that the ethnographic interview gives access to ‘realms of meanings that permeate beyond rote information or finding “the truth of the matter”’ (ibid.). Thus, to reach such ‘truth of the matter’ I needed to find a type of interview that acknowledged the agency of the young participants in this research. When Madison observes that the interviewee is a ‘subject with agency, history and her or his idiosyncratic command of a story’ (ibid.), critical ethnography is providing the young person with the necessary ontological agency. As she further explains:

‘The beauty of ethnographical interviews is in the complex realms of individual subjectivity, memory, yearnings, polemics and hope that are unveiled and inseparable from shared and inherited expressions of communal strivings, social history and political possibility’. (Madison, 2005: 26).

Thus, the use of critical ethnography has also facilitated the necessary stance for endowing the voices of the young people in this work with power.

For Seidman (2006: 78, 79), listening is both the hardest and most important skill in interviewing. He argues that interviewers need to be trained on three different levels. First, to listen to what the participant is actually saying. Second, to listen to the participant’s ‘inner voice’ as distinct from an ‘outer voice’, which would say what was expected in speaking to a larger audience. For example, when I ask sensitive questions about potential bullying at school, I look, when possible, for ways to reach the ‘inner voice’ of the young

participant. Finally, to be able to listen while simultaneously being aware of the time and progress of the interview, so that the target of the interview will be reached.

Given that the primary aim of the research is to obtain trustworthy information through the process of the interviewer asking questions and the interviewee answering as truthfully as possible, the fact that for critical ethnography it is more important to reflect and obtain 'deeper truths' than to acquire verifiable information makes it even more relevant to this work.

Thus, interviews can be defined here as the threshold allowing the young people to speak so that they can be heard and the deep truths of their stories acknowledged. Indeed, interviews have allowed the young participants to talk freely about their life aspirations and experiences, ranging from their experiences at school to the circumstances of their daily routine in the rural village. But the interviews also facilitated a relaxing environment for stakeholders who could become engaged in further discussion about the research when necessary.

There is a wide range of different forms of interviews within qualitative research. As Kvale and Brinkmann (2009:148) have explained, 'there are no general standard procedures and rules for research interviewing'. They make clear that the form of an interview is related to the type of knowledge sought, among the diverse types that are possible. For the purposes of this study, I will refer to the group of interviews traditionally classified according to their degree of structure (see Drever, 2003; Gubrium and Holstein, 2003). There are structured interviews, semi-structured interviews and non-structured interviews. The first group refers to interviews in which the questions are fixed; they follow a given order and are standardised. The second group consists of more or less open-ended questions, which work as an interview guide or a 'structure mapping of topics to be covered' (Drever, 2003: 14). In the final group, the unstructured interviews, the researcher wants to be sensitive to how the participants construct their views and perspectives, and so allows the participants' 'structure' to guide the interview.

Drever (2003) defines semi-structured interviews as those having the 'purpose of obtaining descriptions of the life world of the interviewee in order to interpret the meaning of the described phenomena'.

The preferred type of interview for this work has been the semi-structured face-to-face interview: first, they allowed me to stay focused on the topic, and second, they offered the flexibility to allow new questions to emerge from material that was important for the participant. Finally, I have also opted for one-to-one interviews because, with young participants whose English was not their first language, these interviews offered the chance to listen and to consider their answers and assist if necessary.

Indeed, the open nature of semi-structured interviews has facilitated the process of questioning and answering between interviewer and interviewee. Although a set of questions was ready beforehand, I tried to enable the interviews to develop as a comfortable dialogue which engaged the participants in expressing their feelings, their distress and, sometimes, even their emotions.

The open character of all the questions has, therefore, fulfilled the aim of flexibility set for this study, providing the opportunity for new topics to arise during our communication and hopefully enriching the result of the interviews undertaken. The feature of flexibility also allowed me to seek issues and new questions that proved significant in cases where the young participants' views had not, perhaps, been asked for before. They might also have been taciturn in their answers when referring to sensitive experiences such as racial bullying or discrimination. Culture and language have also been acknowledged during the interviews. This was especially relevant to those participants with a Spanish background, who could be reassured in their original language if necessary.

The types of questions I have used were meant to challenge deeply entrenched narratives of racial privilege and to contribute to social justice. Thus, I have used questions such as:

- How do they treat you at school/community/work?
- Do you have any local friends?
- Have you experienced any bullying at/outside school?

- How is your school/community helping you with any issues of isolation?
- Is anyone/or any organisation or the school supporting you in your aspirations?[5]

In addition, the interviews took an average of about an hour to an hour and a half with the young people and from an hour to two hours, sometimes longer, with stakeholders. All the interviews were recorded and conducted outside school. For the young people, three were at the parent's working place in a separate room, two at the family home with the parents in another room, three in an official building, and one in my car to enable privacy, avoid a parking ticket, and provide the young participant with transport for arriving on time at the working place. The stakeholders' and parents' interviews took place mainly in the working place except for two parents who were interviewed in their homes.

When considering the drawbacks of the interviews through the work of Silverman (2010) and Kvale (1996), I have acknowledged several potential issues.

First, there were latent issues of power which might have arisen between myself, as the interviewer, and the interviewee. From Bourdieu's idea of the power struggle in the field, explaining how researchers and participants may position around power. Thus, either myself, or perhaps the participants, may have become involved in a power struggle (Bourdieu, 1989), potentially, altering or even distorting the answers provided in this study. Accordingly, it has been important I was aware of such a possibility. Indeed, I needed to understand that some interviewees may have tried to reveal only what was socially desirable and, therefore, have manipulated their answers (see for example Silverman, 2005).

Second, there was the fact that interviews were time-consuming, given the hours involved in covering long distances to reach participants across the Highlands. That became apparent when driving to remote settlements or spending time on a train travelling to the field when possible.

[5] Appendix 4, p. 367.

Third, the expenses involved in covering transport, accommodation, and a small payment I made to young interviewees. These expenses need further consideration here. The Highlands being one of the most extensive rural areas in the UK, the transport needed to cover the long distances to reach remotely situated participants included car and train, so that the cost of petrol and tickets needed to be met. Additionally, there were the cinema vouchers and the £10 notes I gave the young people to compensate for their time in taking part. The cinema vouchers were meant for those in settlements with access to a cinema, and the notes were for the young people in remote areas without such access.

Finally, when travelling to a remote settlement, accommodation was necessary to enable me to attend several meetings and interviews with possible candidates, and to carry out some fieldwork and observation for this study.

It is also relevant to understand the sensitive character of the topic of race and racism and discrimination and a potential feeling of ego-threat for participants (Madison, 2005). They may feel that speaking about subjects like their difference, race issues or racism could, perhaps, threaten their self-esteem. Ego-threat, thus, happens when 'the respondent tends to withhold any information which he (or she) fears may threaten his self-esteem' (Gordon, 2003, cited in Madison, 2005: 33). For example, in this study, it has been essential to be conscious of the difficulties of interviewing black and minority ethnic young people in case they might tell me what I wanted to hear rather than describing the reality of their life experiences. Therefore, in order to gain some balance in the information gathered, I have contrasted and completed the young people's stories with those of their parents if/when necessary, and sometimes of another adult, if that actor provided enough positive support, as evidenced by a positive outcome, to the young person.

In addition, due to the long distances it was necessary to cover to reach some of the participants, I seriously considered the use of telephone interviews or even videoconference interviews (Skype). Yet, this is a choice that for the time being I decided to postpone, saving it for further research, as it was deemed essential to 'feel' and 'understand' the participants' environment in order to capture the deeper 'flavour' of their real life experiences and aspirations – something perhaps difficult to achieve by telephone or videoconference.

A final disadvantage to take into account, and which arose in this work, was the frustration involved when potential participants did not show up, following the expenditure of time and money mentioned above. Luckily this only happened on rare occasions.

4.5. Sampling

As we saw in Chapter Two, geography is relevant in the experiences of racism (see Hopkins, 2007; Dwyer and Bressey, 2012). This implied exploring how matters of rurality, when intersected with race and youth, could be significant for the young person's lived experiences: how racism may be impacted on by isolation and lack of access to services and a social network; and how, plausibly, rurality was shaping the young person's life and aspirations. Thus, the geographical location needed some consideration in this work.

Accordingly, given the vast geographical extent of the Highlands, two areas were investigated. The first was remote in that it is more than thirty minutes' drive from the main town, and the other was more accessible, around thirty minutes' drive from it (Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification, 2014), as defined in Chapter Three. The initial intention was to find out how remoteness – geographical isolation – could, perhaps, have an impact, or not, on the understanding of issues of race and racism. This is reflected in how participants have been classified accordingly for data analysis. Four of the participants are from a remote area and four are from an accessible one. Overall, how remoteness impacts on race has been discussed through the literature related to microgeographies during data analysis, and was not compared with similar factors for accessible areas, given the lack of significance it has shown, at least in this study.

A total of nineteen in-depth interviews were undertaken with three different groups. The first group consisted of eight black and minority ethnic young people aged fifteen to twenty-two. The spectrum in age was marked by the difficulty of finding participants. This group contained six females and two males, of whom three were black females, two African

and one Caribbean, and one was a Chinese male; two others, a female and a male, were mixed, their parents being a Spanish/Scottish couple, and two were Eastern European females. The second group interviewed were parents of black and minority ethnic young people: two women and two men. One black Caribbean skilled mother was working as a cleaner; a Chinese male was working as a waiter; a Scottish skilled male was on childcare benefits, and a Spanish female was a graduate in a skilled job. The final group interviewed comprised four service providers employed in education and in the youth sector; they identified themselves as English (one), Scottish (two) and Spanish (one). The practitioners in the youth sector were accountable directly or indirectly for six of the young participants in this study. Finally, there were two agents from the third sector, one Chinese female and one English female, in addition to an Asian academic.

The sample of black and minority young people between fifteen and twenty-two years old was thought to provide enough evidence about the transition from the last years at secondary school and the possible aftermath once school was finished, in regard to their life aspirations.

The young people ranged from those who had experienced at least a year in Scottish education to those who might be considered a first generation in Scotland. Five females were born outside the UK. One male was born in England and two, a male and a female, were born in the Highlands.

4.5.1. Table of Participants

Table 5. Black, White and Minority Ethnic Young People

Ethnicity / Identity and Gender	Age	Years in the Highlands	Area	Occupation	Languages spoken	Aspirations	Race issues in school / community
1. Lala Black African Female	21	13	Remote	Worker support and singer	English and some African	To be a pop singer	– Racist abuse at both – Poor Marks
2. Zafirah Black African Female	17	13	Remote	Secondary student	English	Primary Teacher	– Lack of confidence – Poor marks
3. Sara Black Caribbean Female	15	5	Accessible	Student 5th year High school	English and Spanish	Becoming a Counsellor	– Feelings of isolation – Alienation at school
4. Zach English/ Chinese Male	17	8	Remote	5th year secondary school	English. Understands Cantonese.	Not sure: Marine Biologist or similar	– Constant Racist bullying in and out school – Poor marks
5. Maria White / Mixed Female	16	16	Accessible	5th year at High school	English and Spanish	Traditional Scottish Music. Becoming a Musician,	– Alienation – Poor marks
6. Paul White/ Mixed Male	17	17	Accessible	6th year High School	English, scarce Spanish	University Degree in Chemistry	– None

7. Eva Eastern European Female	22	2	Remote	Waitress and cleaner ESOL Student	Latvian, Russian and English	Becoming a secretary	– Isolation – Racialisation at Work. – Witness of abusive working conditions for Asian job mates
8. Linda Eastern European Female	17	2	Accessible	Student	Latvian, English and some Russian	Photography	– Adamant to return to her country – Lack of agency

Table 6. Stakeholders

Ethnicity/Identity and Gender	Age	Years in the Highlands	Area	Occupation at present	Languages spoken	Any Racist incident?
1. South European Female	56	33	Remote	Youth Worker	English and Spanish	Yes
2. Chinese Male Parent	56	13	Remote	Waiter	Chinese and English	Yes
3. South European Female Parent	48	23	Accessible	Librarian	English and Spanish	Isolation
4. Scottish Female	58	30	Remote	Career advisor	English	No
5. Black Caribbean Mother	42	5	Accessible	Cleaning	English and Spanish	Yes
6. Scottish Parent	43	39	Accessible	Parent of four: Home carer.	English, French and some African language	Yes
7. Scottish Female	45	42	Accessible	Youth Worker	English	No
8. Asian Female	58	28	Remote	Education	English	Yes
9. English Female	58	20	Remote	ESOL teacher	English	Yes
10. English Female	46	-	Accessible	Chair of a Minority Association	English	Yes
11. Asian Female	52	-	Accessible	Chair of a Minority Association	English and Chinese	Yes

The size of the sample has been chosen by considering those whom I could identify as potential participants and who were willing to participate. The reason was to provide space in which to discuss possible issues of racial discrimination and to enrich the social outcome in the analysis of the data. The choice of the terms Black African, Black Caribbean, Chinese Eastern European, and mixed (Scottish/Spanish) for the young people is in line with the Scottish 2011 Census criteria[6] and CRT scholars (Delgado and Stefancic, 2006; Garner, 2006; Leonardo, 2009). The use of the word 'minority' together with 'visible' and 'invisible' is also in response to the work of Chakraborti and Garland (2004) and de Lima (2008), in attending to how visibility or invisibility may or may not shape the subjects' everyday life and, therefore, their later aspirations.

To gain access to the sample, I initially had the assistance of the Highland Council Equality Office and the University of Highlands and Islands. In addition, over two hundred emails were written from the start of the effort to gather participants, which extended over nearly eight months. Apart from these measures, I mainly gained participants through an enormous amount of persistence during the fieldwork, together with the exercise of imagination. After two continuous months with no participants coming forward from agencies, I began to develop opportunistic methods (Mason, 2006).

I developed imaginative and active recruitment strategies. For example, I patrolled the streets of two of the main settlements, delivering leaflets about the study and approaching every takeaway, retail place or business where minority people might be working. This strategy yielded six of the participants: four young people and two parents.

The leaflet[7] carried the logo of my university and explained, in six bulleted points, the nature of the study, including a small reward for participation. The text needed to be adapted on several occasions, sometimes due to lack of understanding of some of the vocabulary – the term 'minority ethnic' seemed problematic, and even 'different culture' was perceived as contestable and exclusionary. In addition, I had to appease a supermarket

[6] http://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/variables-classification/ethnic-group
[7] Appendix 2, pg. 358.

manager who was convinced that I was offering a job to potential young candidates when rewarding them with a cinema voucher or a £10 note for the interview.

The patrolling consisted of approaching every minority person I encountered in the rural town, walking into every retail place or restaurant where black and minority ethnic young people were visible, or any place in the town where possible young candidates might be found. In addition, I spread the word about my study to black and minority ethnic people in both towns through the leaflets. These two methods combined, although exhausting, proved to be the best for gathering candidates.

The difficulty of access has been mainly related to the young people. But it also applied to some key practitioners – from the public to the third sectors. This included mainly those working within the local authority, who did not respond to repeated requests for a face-to-face interview.

As an example of the difficulties, a school head-teacher insisted on delivering 'surveys' to the minority pupils in her school, assuming that this was a quantitative study, and refusing any cooperation once it was made clear that interviews were to be the method used. On another occasion, after delivering leaflets at a remote town, I had a phone call from a twenty-two years old Pakistani male accounting some racist incidents. We agreed on three different opportunities for holding an interview, but despite the time and money spent on it, it never happened. Nevertheless, the story he gave on the phone about his experience of racism at a remote village, despite not being recorded, is taken into account as part of the context.

The remoteness of the area of the fieldwork for this study required me to drive more than three thousand miles around the Highlands in the middle of winter, sometimes facing extreme weather conditions. In addition, the cold temperatures in the streets while 'patrolling' to seek potential participants contributed an extra ingredient of toughness to this study.

Overall, data collection for the study was impeded by the persistent silences of gatekeepers. Some initial offers of interviews with minority young people, some from Eastern Europe, ended in the eventual muteness of practitioners from the third and public sectors. I even received an email including a sceptical emoticon[8] and stating: 'This is a small community and not willing to talk', from a teacher of English as a foreign language. This may well illustrate the difficulty of recruiting my sample and, perhaps, the fear of being identified.

4.6. Analysing the data

According to Hammersley and Atkinson (1995: 205), the analysis of data begins in the pre-fieldwork stage, when clarifying and formulating research dilemmas, and can continue throughout the period of writing reports, articles and books.

The initial steps in analysing qualitative data consist of finding some theories and concepts to help comprehend the data. We probably ask ourselves why what is occurring in the fieldwork is actually happening, and what the deepest factor in explaining the data might be. Thus, the target is not only to decipher and make intelligible the data but 'to do so in an analytical way that provides a novel perspective on the phenomena we are concerned with or which promises to tell us much about other phenomena or similar types' (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995: 209).

In conducting the analysis, I have also taken into account the work of Hollway and Jefferson (Hollway and Jefferson, 2000, cited in Elliot, 2005: 159), who suggest a four-question framework; this is also related to Hammersley and Atkins (1995):

- '*What do I notice?*
- *Why do I notice what I notice?*

[8] Emoticon: A graphical representation, either in the form of an image or made up of text characters, of a particular emotion of the writer.

- *How can I interpret what I notice?*
- *How can I know that my interpretation is the right one?*'

(Hollway, W. and Jefferson, T., 2000)

These questions have stimulated some discussion as to why I have noticed certain points or matters and how to interpret the data.

To achieve this, there has been an initial reading of each transcript from which emerging themes have been identified. I then attempted to code according to themes and with reference to the key research question.

Saldaña (2009) understands coding as a 'word or short phrase' to which the researcher assigns a representative meaning related to the research question. Codes can be of diverse types. When the code reproduces part of a phrase used by the participant it is called an 'In Vivo Code' (Saldaña, 2009: 3).

Code in this study is not precise but interpretive. Codes tend to condense and summarise data to allow the later analysis of each datum. Coding is, therefore, the process of transition from data collection to the more expanded data analysis; it is a heuristic tool for discovering and bringing to light the participants' information (Richards and Morse, 2013: 149).

Categories are more abstract concepts derived from the codes. They may contain 'clusters' of coded data, using the same words, although not necessarily (Saldaña, 2009). From Categories we reach Themes and from there we elaborate Theories. Yet, the process of 'reaching theory is much more complex and messy', as Richards and Morse (2007) have explained.

Here is an example of data analysis from the present work:

Table 7. Example of data analysis from the present work

Data	Codes	Categories	Themes
'When I was being racially abused and stuff'. (Zach, 17, British-Chinese, Remote)	1. Race abuse	1. Racism at rural secondary school (Arshad et al., 2005)	**Racism at rural remote**
'They (teachers) not dare to see it, they did not see it at all They were blind … they just didn't see it'. (Zach, 17, British-Chinese, Remote).	2. Teachers Blind Consciously/ Unconsciously Race abuse	2. Teacher's Complacency over Racism at school (Hill et al., 2007; Myers and Bhopal, 2015)	**Racism ignored at schools** **Teachers as Institutional Actors**
'That is why I told myself I have to deal with it myself'.	3. Dealing with Racism 4. On my own (myself)	3. Minority Youth expected to sort racism on their own at rural secondary schools. (Beck, 2001; Schäfer, 2007)	**Individualisation** **Youth issues**
'When I was young I did not want to be different.' (Maria, 16, Spanish/Scottish, Accessible)	1.Younger 2.Issue with Difference 3.Rejection	1. Denial of Difference (Philo, 1992; Cloke, 2006) 2. Discrimination (Arshad et al., 2005) 3. Misrecognition of Minority Youth's culture at rural schools (Dawney, 2008). White hierarchy (Garner, 2006)	Racialisation of minority young people at rural Scotland. Whiteness

All the above has been applicable to this work. As explained in regard to epistemology, it was during the process of transcribing and particularly while analysing the data that I discovered CRT. In fact, I could even argue that it was the data that led me to CRT. Before that I could not make much sense of my study and found initially encountered theories confusing and ambiguous. In keeping with Hammersley and Atkinson's (1995) observations, I could not provide original knowledge and theory surrounding minority rural young people's experiences of racism and discrimination until the data illuminated the theoretical framework necessary for this work.

With CRT as the vantage point, I have contrasted my findings with the literature related to the area, in which some themes have emerged. When the emerging themes are confronted with previous research, it seems that the interpretation here could be the right one. From that point I have looked into the possible consequences of all this emergent learning that has come to light (Bryman, 2012).

4.7. Trustworthiness, Authenticity, Ethics and Reflexivity

4.7.1. Trustworthiness and Authenticity

Following Given and Saumure (2008), the importance of the notion of trustworthiness in qualitative research has enabled researchers to vindicate the excellence of qualitative works and terminology as against quantitative forms. Thus, when choosing the above concepts, I am consciously and consistently placing this study at a point removed from positivist stances. Indeed, it is the trustworthiness of any qualitative research that is often refuted and questioned by positivists, who subscribe to the use of the terms validity and reliability instead (Shenton, 2004).

What the researcher using trustworthiness aims at is to be able to attain the rigor of qualitative research along with the virtues mentioned earlier of subjectivity and distancing from any positivist target of objectivity. Otherwise, this would be another merely descriptive work with no claim to a political approach, and removed from the arena of social justice that it would like to occupy. Consequently, trustworthiness can be defined as 'the ways in which qualitative researchers ensure that transferability, credibility, dependability, and conformability are evident in their research' (Given and Saumure, 2008: 896).

Qualitative researchers agree on the difficulty of proving the authenticity of qualitative studies (Hammersley, 1992: 70; Silverman, 2005; Bryman, 2012). The essential characteristic of understanding inherent in qualitative research lies, in fact, in the researcher's subjectivity. As mentioned above, the awareness of this confers trustworthiness on the present study.

Authenticity is one of the main issues for qualitative researchers. To pursue authenticity and ensure that the study is trustworthy, we endeavour as researchers to conduct and evaluate the research with sincerity and credibility. These qualities need to be applied not only to the participants' lived experiences but also to the possible social and political consequences of this research.

Thus, the use of authenticity enables one to discard the old, common anxieties about validity and reliability transferred from positivist approaches, and also enables qualitative research to move into the arena of social justice with the resulting potential benefits for our societies (see James, 2008: 45).

To these factors can be added consideration of the level of existing knowledge surrounding this area of research, which has been described previously in the literature review chapter, where its plausibility and credibility are reinforced. However, the authenticity of this type of study can always be challenged by later evidence offered against it, making it an 'ad infinitum' activity (Hammersley, 1992).

The trustworthiness of this study has also been supported by recording the interviews, while understanding the importance of being careful, at the time of transcription, to transcribe the data that were presented.

Interviews have been granted all the necessary approval from the School of Education Ethics, this study being guided by the ethical codes of SERA (Scottish Educational Research Association; Appendix 5), derived from the British Educational Research Association.

4.7.2. Ethics: Anonymity and confidentiality

Anonymity and confidentiality have been assured to all participants before and during the interviews according to data protection guidelines (Madison, 2005:111). Anonymity, for example, has been preserved by means of identifying participants by their age, gender and whether they are at Remote or Accessible.

In fact, it would be significant to highlight here that issues of anonymity are especially challenging in rural studies. That is the reason names of towns and settlements have been avoided and just mentioned as Remote or Accessible.

Indeed, the struggle with anonymity in rural studies (Cloke et al., 2006) suggests the need for awareness concerning potentially vulnerable groups, like the one this research has been targeting, and the possible consequences that this vulnerability could bring to their everyday lives. As I was targeting black and minority ethnic young people, these issues of anonymity, together with the sensitive subject, raised some concerns and obstacles in relation to gathering participants and preserving their anonymity, for the reasons stated above.

Moreover, some possible participants were afraid of being pinpointed if they took part in my study, a fear arising from the constraints that the rural world imposes. As one of my participants explained: 'Everybody knows everybody here'. There was a high risk that they could be identified and targeted later by their rural communities.

This has been one of the many difficulties which this study has faced in seeking to preserve anonymity while revealing the feelings of harassment through racial abuse, or of isolation and discrimination, experienced by most of the young participants, as perceived by this study, and dealt with in secrecy and silence in this rural world.

Additionally, there needs some ethical consideration of the cinema vouchers and the £10 notes I gave to the young people to compensate for their time and also to attract potential participants. Head et al. (2009: 335) argues the significance of bringing awareness about

the dormant impact of 'making payments to research participants', something which would need further ethical discussion. In our case, the payment and vouchers proved to be a positive support.

Here it will also be important to make clear that permission has been obtained from all participants through a consent form, which they have signed. In addition, they have been informed of the possibility of withdrawal from the interview at any time if they feel they want to, or if they should need to, prior to the interview.

Regarding permits, I was aware of the need for a permit from the School of Education Ethics Committee, and for that purpose, a letter from the University of Edinburgh authorising me to conduct this research was requested and obtained. This letter also allowed for a disclosure check in case I needed to go into schools, which in the end was not necessary.

Finally, here it is essential, once more, to acknowledge that there is no naïve intention to achieve neutrality in this study. Indeed, this is claimed as an interested political work, and thus, through acceptance of this fact, such a challenge to the results of the work can be overcome. Furthermore, it is important to state that this study is intended to bring about change, when possible, regarding any possible injustices found to have affected the young participants.

Other essential ethical codes which have been applied in this study are:

4.7.2.1. Openness and transparency

All participants were informed of the aim of the study and it was ensured that in all aspects they had transparent information about any procedure. For that purpose, a leaflet containing

clear information about the intentions of this study was provided to all participants prior to their interviews.[9]

The content of that leaflet had to be modified about three times during the research. That was due to two circumstances. One was the difficulty the participants had in understanding some of the wording. The other was their fear of feeling 'different' from the local population.

Despite several attempts, any of the terms might be contested. The persistent suspicion of the political content of this study, as suggested by the use of the words 'minority ethnic', closed many doors. Again, the term 'different', used to substitute previous, proved to be controversial. So I concluded introducing 'young people speaking another language rather than English at home'. This last finally opened a few more doors to possible participants.

4.7.3. Reflexivity

Through the words of anthropologist Caplan, I now consider my positionality within this study. As Caplan explains:

'There are a … number of factors which determine the kinds of data we collect, and our interpretation of them. One of the most important of these is our positionality – who are we for them? Who are they for us? Such questions have to be considered … in terms of such factors as our gender, age and life experience, as well as our race and nationality.' (Caplan, 1993: 178)

Accordingly, in the case of this study, who am I for my young participants and who are they for me? Thus, the self, as Reinharz (1997: 3) explains, becomes 'the key fieldwork tool' for understanding my position as a researcher. As Caplan continues:

[6] Appendix 4. Pgs. 367, 368, 369, 370.

‘I have become aware that being an ethnographer means studying the self as well as the other. In this way, the self becomes ‘othered’, an object of study, while at the same time, the other, because of familiarity, and a different approach to fieldwork, becomes part of the self.’ (Caplan, 1993: 180)

Chiming with Caplan, in 1990, Bourdieu in his work ‘In Other Words: Essays towards a reflexive sociology’ already draws attention to the significance of a reflexive sociology wherein researchers must operate with conscious attention to their position, their internal formation, and how this position may cause misinterpretation or bias to impair ‘objectivity’.

In the process of awareness, it is significant understanding our position of power within the research. As Lakoff (1992: 17), taking a similar position to Bourdieu’s, reminds us ‘our every interaction is political, whether we intend it to be or not; everything we do in the course of a day communicates our relative power, our desire for a particular sort of connection, our identification of the other as one who needs something from us, or vice-versa’.

Accordingly, through being conscious of my position of power, as a researcher I can infer how I might be enabled to explore, through my awakened critical lenses, any injustice and, thus, how my research and actions can help to have an impact on it. Drawing on the above, this approach would be a central feature of the positionality I consciously choose as a researcher and academic, and for this work in particular.

In addition, my positionality as a minority white researcher brings a double awareness. First, it encompasses CRT’s recognition of the inequality based on ‘white privilege’ and ‘white supremacy’, resulting in perpetuation of the marginalisation of visible minorities. Second, it illuminates the concept of a ‘hierarchy of whiteness’ (Garner, 2007), in which I can be simultaneously othered and self-racialised as a minority, and the impact this can have on my fieldwork. Going back to Caplan’s work, I can ask ‘Who am I to my participants?’ and ‘Who are they for myself?’ – both perspectives being crucial for understanding the interaction and the power relations in this work.

Consequently, I needed to be conscious of my access to white privilege (Thomann, 2011) and urged myself to question my racial prerogatives continuously, disclosing the silences and the invisible nature of any racism I encountered (see Trepagnier, 2008; Sleeter, 2012). Also, awareness of the concept of 'White hierarchy' has enabled me to identify the racialisation that white people, like myself, can experience, depending on their proximity to 'White privilege'. Being from the South of Europe, and, more precisely being Spanish, places me within stereotypes such as 'waiters, lazy, always late, stupid, religious and so on' … and suggests how those prejudices could have an impact on my study. Hence, as a white researcher from a minority background who would like to place this work within the realm of social justice, I will challenge any undeserved privilege of whiteness, including the hierarchy related to 'White privilege'.

I also wish to be reflexive about the emotions which have arisen during the fieldwork: to place emotions within this work (see Bondi, 2005), from the initial feelings of excitement at the beginning of fieldwork, to the feelings of despair and frustration that gradually increased during the difficulties in recruiting young participants. The first was a symptom of a naïve stance, probably fuelled by the hopes aroused by initial emails from participants, which never actually led to anything. It took a while to understand that many contacts were simply trying to be polite, and probably did not intend to cooperate.

Next was the emotion of success when I finally gathered some participants through the leaflets I created, and the sensation of accomplishment after the long hours spent patrolling accessible and remote settlements in the glacial winter, hours that, eventually, proved meaningful. There was the self-satisfaction when patience, and above all persistence in a subject like racism and racialisation in a rural environment (Neal, 2002; Chakraborti and Garland, 2004; Dawney, 2008), were rewarded.

Finally, continuing with Reinharz's work, I have considered my positionality as a woman, a mother, a teacher, and a doctoral student aged fifty-two at the time of the fieldwork, together with whatever influence all these factors might have on my study. As she has explained, 'the researcher does not know in advance what attributes will be meaningful in the field' (Reinharz, 1997:18). Consequently, understanding the self in the fieldwork helps

to alleviate the epistemological pressure on us as researchers, offering a position for our research that is opposed, on the one hand, to an un-reflective positivism and, on the other, to a self-centred narcissism. Thus, I agree with Reinharz on the undeniable utility of knowing why and how the self works, and on this being the key fieldwork tool.

Conclusion

The complex nature of this study, with its three socially constructed categories of race, rurality and youth, needed to be taken into account in the methodology applied to it. The choice of qualitative research came before that of CRT, making it easier to encounter and develop CRT and to make of this a political work. Through the two essential features of subjectivity and flexibility provided by qualitative research, I was assured of the support needed to fulfil the aims of this work and place it in the arena of social justice. In addition, Solórzano's racial microaggressions theory incorporates exploration of the most common and subtle forms of racial discrimination and exclusion, including that directed at the white minority community, in current race experiences. His theory illuminates the main elements at the core of racism and racial discrimination: power and exclusion.

With the assistance of Qualitative Research I arrived at CRT, finding the theoretical and methodological lens through which to unmask patterns of racial exclusion and discrimination affecting the young participants of this work, in light of my aim of creating a political work and placing the study in the arena of social justice. Thus, through the concept of intersectionality, this study has also incorporated the idea that diverse social constrainers can simultaneously converge in the same young person and shape her or his life experiences and aspirations so as to create unique experiences. These constrainers include rural geographies and what they might imply as possible barriers for a young person with a black and minority ethnic background. CRT has also made possible the use of the tool of counter-storytelling to give voice to the marginalised subjects of this work: the black

and minority young people, whose voices have been silenced, rarely heard and often misrecognised.

The choice of qualitative research has guaranteed this to be a political work. Despite this study being resonant of complexity and defiance, with the inherent difficulties entangled in the exploration of race and youth when converging with 'place', the ‘utensils’ for reaching the perceptions of the young people participating in this thesis shave been found and applied thanks to using a qualitative approach. Critical ethnography has additionally provided the tools necessary for covering a challenging fieldwork when I became a Jack-of all -trades to gather participants. Qualitative research has also facilitated, through CRT and racial microaggressions lenses, the examination and analysis, with critical cognizance, of the young people’s words, what they are undergoing and, on some occasions, the expression of their adversities through tears. Their stories we will explore and to be narrated in the next chapter.

5

Chapter 5: The Stories Narrated by Eight Black, White and Minority Young People in the Scottish Highlands

'*A grown woman when I was fourteen called me racist name … it was like in a dance:*

"Oh go back to your own country" and all this … "you Black turkey" and all that stuff"… the thing is that she got away with it because the police didn't do anything. Apparently she got fined seventy pounds for it, for calling me that … there was no apologies, there was nothing. We didn't see anything happening and that was the end of it.'

(Lala, twenty, black, remote).

Introduction

The narratives in this chapter focus on how issues of race, racism, ethnicity, rurality and age intersect and appear to shape the life experiences and aspirations of the eight young participants in this research.

Although each young person has his/her own distinct story to tell, there are three common themes that can connect all the narratives. Firstly, there are issues related to a certain sense of isolation experienced by most of the young participants. There are two possible interpretations: the young people's experiences of isolation may arise because they all live in rural areas, and/or because they experience isolation and exclusion as a result of being

perceived as ‘other’ by their neighbours on the basis of their race, ethnicity and/or national origin.

The second theme relates to how the majority of the young people in secondary education, and those in work, experience school and the rural community as a site of exclusion, even violence, instead of a place of inclusion and safety. That school appears to play an active role in reinforcing the young people’s exclusion is something that will be explored through their stories.

The final theme describes the contrasting ways in which young people negotiate exclusion, if and when they experience it. Here it is important to see these young people as active agents who deploy a range of resources to cope with and sometimes to rebel against their isolation and exclusion in their communities.

For the first theme, in order to understand these young people’s experiences, we must consider the narrative related to geography, or rurality, by exploring critically how rurality intersects with race and difference (for example, de Lima, 2001a, 2003, 2006; Neal, 2002; Neal and Agyeman, 2006; Hopkins, 2007; Askins, 2008; Dwyer and Bressey, 2008; Dawney, 2008).

For the second theme, we can only consult the limited literature related to the intersection of race, rurality and youth (Panelli, 2002, 2004; Nairn and Panelli, 2003; Panelli et al., 2007; Nayak, 2008, 2015).

For the last theme we will look at literature which addresses issues of youth and agency (for example, Bennel, 2007; Furlong and Carmel, 2007; Heath et al., 2009; Coffey and Farrugia, 2013), acknowledging young people’s life experiences and responses to similar social issues of race and rurality, which can no longer be directly homogenised with those of urban peers.

These stories will demonstrate young people's experiences of exclusion. They document both overt and subtle forms of racism and discrimination and young people's strategies for resilience and resistance in their rural communities. They also tell of denial of difference and how in rural areas there is resistance to accepting 'the other' as one of the community. In addition, I have included the stories of two white siblings born in the Highlands from a first generation, mixed race background. They exemplify how White privilege operates through the articulation of White hierarchy (Garner, 2006) across the siblings' experiences at school and in their village. This perhaps determines who is successful at school and in achieving future aspirations and who is not: how the intersection of white skin colour, middle class membership, micro-geography and gender can affect, or not, a young person's aspirations. To finish, the two last stories are about two Eastern European females. One describes the process of racialisation experienced by a working migrant in her job, with the limited options offered in a remote village. Finally, the account of an experience of cultural shock from a young secondary school girl, adamant to return to her country, exemplifies what could be the painful circumstances of other minority young people when denied any agency by the adults accountable for them: youth workers and teachers in the Highlands.

5.1. Story 1. Lala and Zafirah's Story: Racism as the Norm

Lala and Zafirah's story began on the east coast of Africa twenty years ago when a mixed-race couple adopted the sisters. Their adoptive parents, a white Scottish man and a black African woman, were living and working in the country and later had a third child of their own, who was diagnosed with Down's Syndrome. In 2001, a natural disaster devastated a large part of Lala and Zafirah's country, destroying the family business. At this time, the parents decided to leave the country and settle in Scotland, moving first to a city in the north, and later to the Highlands. Lala was then eight and Zafirah was four.

After coming to Scotland, the parents had a fourth child, but soon after that the couple separated, in 2005. The mother left the family home, and the father brought up the four

girls. This was a decision made in the hope of giving the girls the best support possible, and with the encouragement of a father with an awareness of issues of racism as a result of critical awareness gained when studying for a degree in politics. His background, therefore, assisted him in developing an understanding of possible unfair racial issues affecting his daughters, and also helped the family to question service providers' responses to the racism they might experience, as well as the local cultural literacy over matters of race. At the time of the interview, Lala was twenty and Zafirah was seventeen.

5.1.1. School as a Site of Racism and Exclusion

When they first arrived in the Highlands, neither of the sisters could speak English. They found it hard to fit in and encountered a dearth of support from their school and rural community. As Lala stated:

'It was kind of hard going through primary school because obviously not even speaking English for a start as well … so TV and interact[ing] with kids it was hard, you know, when making friends because obviously they did not speak the same language I did.'

Zafirah shared her sister's feelings of being different and excluded, explaining: 'Because I could not speak English I was finding it hard to fit in'.

Added to this difficulty of 'finding it hard to fit in' were encounters with more overt racism, with Lala being the sister who opposed this. Indeed, Lala confronted her schoolmates and told off her peers when, for example, they used the 'n word'[10] to provoke her:

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[10] [1] *The Word **Negro** was adopted from Spanish and Portuguese and first recorded from the mid 16th century. It remained the standard term throughout the 17th -18th centuries and was used by W.E.B. Du Bois and Booker T. Washington in the early 20th century. Since the civil right movement in the 1960s, when the term black was favoured to express racial pride, Negro and Negress dropped out becoming out of date and even offensive. Britain and US English* (Oxford Dictionary: http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/negro).

‘There’s a lot of stuff that happened in school, you know, kids would say the word, you know, that we got taught about the history of it and the history of black people and they would say it but, and like if I react to it they said, ‘We were having a laugh’, but it is not really, because remember I am not finding it funny because I am not laughing at you and I never said anything like that.'

Lala’s memories of her schooling, as evidenced in the above quotation, were painful for her to recount. She notes how racism was minimised, deflected or excused by her peers as simply humour and remembers her attempts at resistance in which she reminded her classmates she was not enjoying their joke. This racism, unsurprisingly, meant that Lala avoided her fellow pupils both inside and outside school, which increased her feelings of isolation. She states: ‘I did not want to meet people from my school. I did not want to be mixed with those people because they gave me a hard time’.

Lala’s experience of racism at school is well documented in previous works (see for example Jackson, 2002; Arshad et al., 2005; Gillborn, 2006a; 2008; Crozier and Davies, 2008; Cole, 2012). Crozier and Davies (2008: 298) explain how racist harassment and abusive behaviour towards young people with a cultural difference is practised more frequently by white students when there is little or no interaction with diversity in schools, such as the one Lala attended.

In addition, Lala’s experience at school was marked by her negative relationships with teachers and their low expectations of her and of her future. She observed, ‘Teachers from school made me like the stupid one, all the time, when I wasn’t really.’

Her teachers’ low expectations of her were jeopardising her aspirations, because she had no guidance or support at school. Indeed, Lala had no idea what she was going to do in the future:

‘So when my teacher of art told me that she didn’t think I was good enough to do my Highers, I did not know what I was going to do. I thought I was actually done then.’

Following Gillborn (2008, 2012), Lala's words exemplify teachers' low expectations of black pupils and their responsibility for widening the gap in achievement between black and white students in the UK. It also illustrates the potential institutional racism at Lala's school, which I will expand on in the next chapter.

Despite her experience of exclusion and lack of support, Lala was able to maintain her self-belief and resist her teachers' low expectations by moving to the Central Belt and successfully studying for an HNC (Higher National Certificate) in music at a local college. Lala is currently living with her white Scottish boyfriend who is a musician. In the mornings she works with children with additional support needs and in the evenings she sings in a band with her boyfriend; she also does some modelling to earn extra income.

Even though Zafirah, like her sister Lala, also experienced racism, isolation and exclusion, her analysis of her situation and the way that she negotiated it are very different. Zafirah is still in school, living with her father and helping to look after her younger sisters. She aspires to work as a teacher. However, she is concerned that her poor school grades will prevent her from achieving her goal. Critically, she worries that she is simply not 'smart enough' for further study. While she also received no support or assistance as a student from a non-English speaking background, Zafirah appeared to internalise rather than externalise the problem of poor results. It seemed she did not like confrontation and was described as more introverted than her sister, as her father explained: 'Zafirah's much quieter, a little bit shyer [than Lala – my words]; she won't put herself in a situation where there's possible conflict.'

Zafirah's introversion and difficulty in withstanding and confronting her potential issues at school or in the community were confirmed by the youth worker responsible for Zafirah, who described her as being 'shy and quite introverted.'

For Zafirah, the marginalisation she experienced at school and in the community was understood as related to her initial inability to speak English, rather than to issues connected with skin colour, as Lala stated. In this sense she individualises her experience of racism

and presents herself as part of the problem rather than assigning responsibility to a school community that was intolerant of a non-native English speaker and provided no services to facilitate language development. She stated:

'… Once I just moved here … I found that in our school well they do speak English and they say something cruel and stuff and you do not understand that, if you do not speak English [and] … some say stuff you do not understand, you cannot be offended by [that].'

Experiences of exclusion and misrecognition of their language and culture at home for minority young people with poor English seems a common praxis of racialisation at schools (see for example Arshad et al., 2005; Pacini and de Almeida, 2006). Schools are in a position of power through which they could offer the opportunity to value and recognise minority young people's background and culture, but instead they demonstrate a negative approach, perceiving the lack of English language as a difficulty and a deficit. Gillborn and Mirza (2000) argue that many schools fail to recognise the value and diversity of students in their curriculums; usually because teachers have little confidence in teaching students from diverse ethnic backgrounds (Myers and Bhopal, 2015: 3).

5.1.2. Experiences of Racism and Exclusion in a Remote Rural Area

Besides their experiences of discrimination, exclusion and racist abuse at school, the sisters narrated encounters with racism and exclusion in the rural community, although the two sisters displayed dissimilar agency over matters of race and racism in the area.

Despite viewing the difficulties she experienced in the Highlands as a result of her own limitations, Zafirah locates them in the past. She stated that racism was pronounced when she arrived in the village but was no longer an issue. She claimed, 'I have been here like that long now, not really and nobody cares about that stuff [racism- my words] … but when we first move here it was quite hard.'

In Zafirah's narrative one senses a certain ambiguity over her racialised experience and, perhaps, even endorsement of the 'no problems here' position (Gaine, 1988; de Lima, 2001; Neal, 2002). It could be that her stance resulted from her wish to abstain from any conflict in the community, together with the introversion her father mentioned earlier.

Interestingly, Zafirah is adamant that she will leave the Highlands when she finishes school in two years and is excited at the prospect: 'I am looking forward to move to [South – my word]. It is more multicultural and all that stuff.'

Being more critical than Zafirah of the local community, Lala recalls feelings of estrangement, of exclusion and of the family being treated as outsiders regardless of the number of years they had lived in the village:

'You are always an outsider, it doesn't matter; you could be living there for like twenty years, fifty years, but if you weren't brought up from the same generation as your friends' granddads or great-grandparents or anything like that you always, it doesn't matter how long you have been there, you are always an outsider.'

Lala's words resonate with the work of Jedrej and Nuttall (1996) about the difficulty for rural communities in Scotland to accept outsiders as locals. That is even extended to the English community, people who are referred to as 'White settlers' or 'incomers'. Nevertheless, the feelings of exclusion and of rejection because of difference tend to be even tougher for those who are visible (Chakraborti and Garland, 2004, 2006) like Lala and Zafirah.

Lala believes that the attitudes of the local people towards their racial difference, and the people's racist remarks, were the result of 'ignorance', as they found 'calling names' funny and were unaware of how they were hurting the target:

‘These people being ignorant about calling somebody names, it does hurt … but they don’t actually find anything wrong with it, if anything they find it’s funny … you know.’

Lala shows an awareness of two themes here: firstly, the damage done by racial disparagement, masquerading as ‘jokes’, and secondly the lack of multicultural literacy in rural areas.

For Ford and Ferguson (2004: 79), ‘disparagement humour (e.g., racist or sexist humour) is humour that denigrates, belittles, or maligns an individual or social group’. They add, ‘such humour has negative consequences … specifically it is thought to create and reinforce stereotypes of social groups and, thus perpetuate prejudices’. When bolstering negative stereotypes and prejudices individually, at a micro level, race-based jokes are seen as preserving and perpetuating social and cultural prejudices at a macro social level. As Pérez (2013: 497) argues, race-based humour reproduces and preserves stereotypes and prejudices when racism is ‘made palatable because the comic is typically not regarded as racist.’

In addition, Lala shows an awareness of the nature of rural racism as ignorance, resonating with the work of Dawney (2008: 4), who explains, ‘racism in rural areas is articulated largely in ways that suggest lack of contact and ignorance rather than direct experience of different cultures’. The ignorance results from lack of interaction between the local population and visible minorities in rural communities, so that the local people’s ideas may be picked up from the media or third parties, instead of from direct contact with minorities. In such a context, generalisations, stereotypes, and unfair and untrue statements towards minorities are deepened. When Lala challenged racial jokes by her peers and her friendship group, she was ready to confront them and even walk away from their friendship if necessary:

‘When I get at friends that was their jokes, they called like Indian people like Pakis, Polish people Poles…. And I like ‘I don’t want to be around that … You are supposed to be my

friend and if you think that's fine to say these things, which are offensive obviously, we are not … in the same mind-set to even to be friends', you know.'

Lala's reaction of confronting her peers over racism seems not to be a common response among minority youth. On the contrary, as shown by research, the norm is that racism is underreported in schools, with silence especially acute in secondary schools. In line with this observation, Ross and Hill (2006: 4) state, 'the greater anonymity experienced in secondary schools may create conditions for racist behaviour to occur amongst young people on a more frequent basis, and impede detection by teachers and school staff'. Although Ross and Hill's study (2006), like most studies on race in Scotland, took place in an urban context, this finding can be extended to the rural schools here. From Lala's story, we can see that the potential 'detection by teachers' of racism was absent given the lack of support she felt she received from them.

In addition, Lala experienced overt forms of racism from some adults in the rural community. Narrating these encounters, Lala also spoke of her disillusionment with the police in regard to tackling racist abuse and racist incidents. On one occasion a woman in the village racially abused her. Despite the police having charged the woman, justice was not fully served, since Lala was not given an apology from the perpetrator:

'A grown woman when I was fourteen called me racist name … it was like in a dance:

"Oh go back to your own country" and all this … "you Black turkey" and all that stuff … the thing is that she got away with it because the police didn't do anything. Apparently she got fined seventy pounds for it, for calling me that … there was no apologies, there was nothing. We didn't see anything happening and that was the end of it.

Lala reflects on two themes above. Firstly, she perceived that there was a lack of any reaction by the local community when she experienced racial abuse: 'It doesn't matter what's going there. There's not really much action because everybody is very close … it is like a close community'. Lala's view that racial issues are not accorded the significance they warrant can be related to further accounts of rural racism.

Indeed, through the Critical Rural Race Narrative (see Chakraborti and Garland, 2004; de Lima, 2004; Scourfield, 2005; Neal and Agyeman, 2006), and its explanation of the specificities of rural racism, we can understand how 'localism' and its inbuilt xenophobia or 'fear of the other' can powerfully season the responses of the White rural population (Garland and Chakraborti, 2004:130) by encouraging overt racism towards 'incomers', like that experienced by Lala.

In addition, Lala's perception that the community is a closed group 'where everyone knows everyone' is explained by de Lima (2008) when recognising rural settlements as 'close-knit communities'. It was this which, presumably, explained the community's inaction and the playing down and silencing of the racism Lala experienced. In addition, the feelings of an insufficient response from the police over her racist attack connects with the accounts by de Lima (2001), Chakraborti and Garland (2004) and Dawney (2008) of how racist incidents and attacks tend to be underreported and, thus, silenced in rural areas.

Besides the overt forms of racism narrated by Lala, both sisters conceivably experienced more subtle forms of racism, or what Solórzano et al. (2000) have named 'racial microaggressions' and what Essed (1991) called 'everyday racism', as we saw in Chapter Four, reminding us of the invisibility and silence of racism in rural areas (de Lima, 2006; Dawney, 2008). In line with this understanding, anti-racist rural authors Neal (2002), Chakraborti and Garland (2004, 2006) and Neal and Agyeman (2006) agree that stereotypes and generalisations, as mentioned by Lala, and the lack of multicultural interaction, as claimed by Zafirah, are particularly evident in rural areas, where racism is exacerbated when combined with geography/rurality.

Unsurprisingly, after all these painful experiences, Lala agrees with her sister and indicates that she does not want to go back to the village, 'Not to go back to where I was … that was never fun'.

To conclude, Lala and Zafirah offer a compelling story of feelings of exclusion and racism in the Highlands. First, there are the feelings of exclusion and racial abuse at school from

their peers and teachers, and accounts of how the latter undermined the sisters' confidence by conveying low expectations of their capacities and aspirations. Then, we see the sisters' dissimilar negotiations in their responses to racism: Lala challenging the abuse and confronting her peers and the community, and Zafirah keeping silent and blaming herself for her difficulties, thereby representing two different forms of resistance and resilience.

Secondly, feelings of exclusion are common when issues of rurality intersect with race, as when Lala attributes the racial attacks in the village to 'ignorance', and Zafirah regrets the lack of difference in the rural community. Thus, the absence of interaction with cultural diversity and different ethnicities is a key feature within rural landscapes. Consequently, we see how the rural population where the sisters lived seem unenlightened in matters of race and racism and unable to deal with difference, thus increasing the impact of racial abuse on the young victims.

5.2. Story 2. Sara's story: A Story of Intense Feelings of Isolation

Sara was born in a Latin American country fifteen years ago. When she was six her parents, both Black Caribbean, got divorced and, after a while, her mother married a White Scottish man she met during his holidays. In 2009, the new family travelled to Scotland, arriving in the Highlands when Sara was ten. At the time of arrival, Sara could speak English because she had learned it back in her original country.

The family first lived and worked in the north of the country; then, after four years, they moved to the southern part of the Highlands where Sara's parents had a contract in a non-skilled job with low wages. The mother was working as a cleaner, despite her skilled background back in her own country. The new home was in an isolated place about fifteen minutes' drive from the nearest town, where Sara's school was located.

Sara was at the end of her fourth year and heading into the fifth. During her interview, she expressed concern over feelings of isolation, including at school, where she described a difficult relationship with her peers and general distress with her rural experience. In addition, she articulated the poverty the family lived in. She was fifteen at the time of this study.

5.2.1. Geography and the Feelings of Isolation: The Silences over 'Black' in a White Rural Community

After a year in her new school, Sara has not made new friends, nor has she much of a social life. As she explained: 'I do not really go out that much … I stay at home'. At first, Sara justified her isolation during the interview by the scarcity of young people where she lived, as she considered it difficult to meet new friends in these circumstances: 'We are from a small area and there are not many students. We are hardly sixty-five pupils in the whole school … It is a bit hard to meet new people and to make friends'.

But later, when reflecting on whether she felt recognised, Sara expressed difficulty in understanding her experiences with her peers at school, saying: 'Yeah, I do feel accepted. It is just weird because that they are not your friends'. Sara concluded that her perception of her peers as 'not-being-friends' has perhaps arisen as a result of never encountering them outside school. She explained, 'No, [I] never met them outside school'.

Sara's experience of isolation suggests an intersection of race issues with rurality and youth. This can be partly explained through the work of Panelli et al. (2007: 19), who argue: 'Young people are seen to employ experiences and images of place in constructing identities through both similarity and difference' (see also Hall et al., 1999; Holloway and Valentine, 2000).

It seems the difficulties she has expressed about interacting with her peers are related to her difference as a visible, Black Caribbean young person. Perhaps the reactions resulted from

schoolmates' lack of previous contact with visible diversity. This perception of geography, or rurality, intersecting with race is reinforced when Sara interprets what might be the reason for her peers' silences, as she explains: 'Well some of them do not seem to like to use the word "black", but because they think I may get offended, but I don't'. Thus, the awkward silences around Sara over the word 'black' may well be explained by this absence of knowledge of visible difference, and the fear of getting it wrong on the part of her schoolmates, who think they should keep silent and avoid using the word 'black', so as not to offend her.

As Garland and Chakraborti (2006: 163) argue, 'The fact that someone may look 'visible different' appears to act as a catalyst for forms of racism peculiar to environments where white communities are simply not familiar with, or used to, people with markedly different physical features', as in Sara's community.

To help explain Sara's feelings of isolation further, Dwyer and Bressey (2008: 3) similarly discuss 'the significance of the micro geographies of everyday life in understanding how ethnicity is lived and how ideas of race are made, mobilised and encountered'. Thus, we need to consider here the distinct and unique character of the context of rurality, in which Sara is living, when analysing race and racism. This implies a local understanding of race, with ethnic identities emerging from the encounter with 'race in place'. How are ideas about race formed in Sara's rural context?

Nayak (2003) highlights how the intertwining of ethnic identities, imaginaries and place determine the formation of white ethnicities, and how this involves excluding black minorities to form an imagined, white landscape in rural areas. As de Lima (2001), Neal (2002), and Garland and Chakraborti (2006: 40) have argued, rural Britain is imagined as white, and 'black' is not seen as part of the countryside. Accordingly, the imaginary perception of the Scottish Highlands is associated with the epitome of 'the rural idyll'. This is entangled with the idea of whiteness, as we saw in chapter three, making Sara someone who does not fit into the landscape of the white norm.

It seemed that Sara's difference, her skin colour, and ways of making her feel included have not been discussed at school. Her feelings of marginalisation are, perhaps, fuelled by the sense of being treated differently at school. Indeed, when reflecting on feelings of belonging and whether she was perceived as an outsider, she concluded: 'Probably yes … we don't belong here, do we?' In view of all the above, Sara's feelings of isolation and marginalisation are understandable.

Despite the awkward silences surrounding her skin colour which Sara describes, she gives no account of racism and race issues at school. She cannot bring any of this to mind and when she reflected on bullying she said, 'No, that I recall'. It seemed that Sara was, perhaps, not ready to discuss the silence around her, as she did not give voice to issues of race or racism at school.

Nevertheless, through her mother, it became clear that Sara was concerned about disconcerting behaviour at her school, when her mother documented: 'I have asked and she says in school they treat her different. She thinks they are scared of her or something like that, because of her colour'. Thus, it is plausible that those silences over the word 'black', together with Sara's perception of the school being disturbed by her skin colour were further fuelling her feelings of alienation.

We cannot obtain a definite answer from Sara. But when she speculated about whom she trusted most, she articulated: 'Definitely mum, because she is always there': thus, the mother was the stable figure in her life. Consequently, Sara's main support in dealing with issues at school and in the community was her mother, who listened to her and helped her deal with the feelings of isolation she was experiencing.

Perhaps Sara did not wish to discuss her issues of race except with her mother, who described during her interview her concern about Sara's feelings of isolation at school. Sara even pondered with her mother the question of whether her schoolmates could be afraid of her skin colour, an idea presumably based on the silence she experienced around her. All this might reflect the defencelessness Sara probably felt in her rural school experience.

Thinking about this further, Sara made it clear that she felt her school was not providing the support she needed, although some effort was made to communicate with her about her circumstances and her aspirations. However, she felt they were not helping much. Here it could be noted that there were some contradictions in the sparse account she gave: 'No, I don't think they do right now … they do try their best …'. What we do know is that her communication with her teachers was infrequent; Sara explains: 'don't really communicate much with them [the teachers – my words]'. A similar response concerned the youth worker responsible for running the youth café and organising social activities at her school. This was a figure who, perhaps, could have been helpful to Sara by assisting with her feelings of isolation; but Sara made clear:

'No … I do not really speak to her [the youth worker] that much. When she needs something or I need something I can go ask her, is that really how she can know it [her issues]'.

Given her feelings of isolation at the time of the interview, it seemed that the school's efforts to communicate with and assist Sara had been futile and had limited impact. Perhaps Sara's low confidence and the close relationship with her mother triggered a lack of trust in her teachers and in the youth worker, so that she kept silent about her issues of isolation and feelings of marginalisation. We cannot know for sure because she is not vocal on the subject.

Reflecting further on why she did not go out with her peers, and her feelings of marginalisation, Sara internalised the issue, blaming herself and saying that she was 'not very good in making new friends … because I don't really talk to them so they don't talk to me'. Thinking she was responsible for the situation, Sara began to cry.

Unsurprisingly, Sara wanted her circumstances of isolation in her rural community and at school to change, saying she would like 'to be more social' and identifying herself, once more, as the one to blame for her loneliness. She could not explain further her issues with communication. What we can see is that she appears to believe that she is the one responsible for establishing a dialogue both with her peers and with the adults accountable for her welfare, such as her teachers, despite being a young person in need of support to tackle her feelings of isolation.

From the above we can summarise the situation by analysing Sara's perception of her isolation as a mixture of feelings of loneliness and alienation which are related to three plausible sources. The first is rurality, in that the geographical remoteness of the place where she lived could be part of the answer. Secondly, and connected with the previous factor, there is the process of racialisation she was experiencing at school. The marginalisation Sara sensed at school was probably due to her skin colour, something she could not articulate, although it was apparent from her mother's words. The third source is related to her agency. Sara blames herself; apparently she has very little confidence, and this is probably a result of the process of racialisation she was experiencing at school. Also, her introversion might be part of the reason for her isolation. All three reasons – place, race and agency – intersect and seem to converge simultaneously in Sara's story.

Interestingly enough, despite her assessment of her difficulty in making friends, Sara had explained previously that she kept in touch with former fellow-students from primary school and had even met up with them. She stated, 'We talk through Facebook and when they come down … I see them'. From this, it appears that she had not had problems in making friends in the past.

To conclude, given Sara's feelings of isolation and marginalisation, it would be pertinent to pose the following question here: what has been the role of her teachers and the youth worker in Sara's experience of isolation from and exclusion by her classmates? How have they supported and acknowledged her difficulties in making new friends, and to what, if any, extent have they been aware of the silences affecting her? How are her feelings of marginalisation, perhaps, having an impact on her confidence and on her studies? Finally, Sara mentioned a further significant barrier to her future aspirations: the low family income.

5.2.2. When Poverty Intersecting with Race and Place Constrains a Young Person's Aspirations

Reflecting on her studies and her achievement at school, what Sara expressed seemed to be related to previous circumstances at school: her low confidence and feelings of alienation. She stated: 'Study wise … it is going ok, but it could be better', reflecting a certain dissatisfaction in this respect.

Sara was uncertain about her future, but considering some options she expressed a desire to go to university and study Psychology. She explained, 'I was hoping to learn how to do … like Psychology … Because I want to understand how people's lives work and why they do things'. Sara aspiration may have been informed by her current relationship with her schoolmates, as she expressed a wish to learn to communicate better and understand her peers in order to be able to approach them. She explained: 'I am not really good in like what to say. I find it difficult. [I] don't know what to say to them [schoolmates] to make them talk'. Indeed, Sara stated that she aspired to make a career as a counsellor: 'I was hoping to … going into counselling … maybe', and explained: 'I just want to understand why people do things like the way they do'.

However, she was not sure whether she could achieve this, because of financial problems in the family. This was a grave concern for Sara, as she clarified: 'Money … the lack of money because if I want to go to university or college … There is not much money'. Poverty, or low family income, is one of the main constraints for rural young people in achieving their aspirations. This applies to any young person in a rural context. As Spielhofer et al. argue in their report (2011: 4), 'lower wages in rural areas may impact on young people's choice to participate in higher education'. Thus, Sara is not an exception, and she is aware of the family's financial difficulties.

When asked about support from her teachers for her aspirations she explained: 'They ask you what you want to achieve for the future and how they can help' and adds, 'I did not really tell anyone [about her aspirations]'. From her words, it is difficult to know whether the school had engaged in providing tangible support for her aspirations. What we know is that, to fulfil them, Sara was even considering getting a job to support her studies: 'Maybe

I should get a job before I go to university'. In fact, despite her age, Sara had already gained some experience cleaning: 'Last summer I went to work as a cleaner'. However, she also stated that she was ambitious, although she felt uncertain about how to fulfil her aspirations: 'I am ambitious, it is just I don't know how to do it'. Perhaps Sara was afraid she might be trapped in her own process of racialisation, like her mother, something I will expand on in the next chapter.

From the above, given Sara's circumstances of isolation; her feelings of marginalisation; the silences she described; and the family's poverty, the options for gaining support and sufficient cultural capital to enable her to reach her goal of studying Psychology at university might well be jeopardised and thus, need to be questioned. Sara's story is also an example of how low income, or poverty, intersecting with race and place are shaping the aspirations of this young person.

Indeed, her state of alienation, apparently overlooked by the school, her teachers and the youth worker, when combined with her racialisation as a Black Caribbean (Solomos, 2003) in a rural area such as the Highlands, where the majority of the population is white, together with the poverty of her family, may prove to be insurmountable barriers to Sara's aspirations.

To conclude, Sara presents a rural story of feelings of isolation and marginalisation, exacerbated through the intersection of race, rurality and poverty. These result in deep distress and disaffection, as a result of her experiences in a rural community and at her school. Reactions at school to her difference, namely her skin colour, are immersed in silence. We see how this silence is, potentially, deepening Sara's feelings of exclusion and alienation, as she copes on her own and with her mother with her school issues. We also see how the lack of discussion of her difference enmeshed her in the silence, as a form of resilience and resistance at school.

In addition to isolation, Sara explained how the family's financial circumstances acted as a further constraint on fulfilment of her aspirations and her aim of studying at university. This factor will probably restrict and determine her options in pursuing her goals. The

combination of race, feelings of isolation, and the poverty she lives in with her family has the potential to obstruct her future aspirations.

5.3. Story 3. Zach's story: Rural Racism on a Young Person's Experience: Is Racism Shaping Aspirations?

Zach was born in the north of England in 1997. His parents, originally from China, came to live and work in Britain during the eighties. When he was eight his parents separated and his mother left the family home after they had decided that Zach should live with his father. When Zach was nine, his father was offered a job in a remote village, triggering the move to the Highlands. There he has been living and studying for the past eight years: first, continuing his studies at the local primary school, a period he has recalled positively, and later entering the high school in the town.

At the time of the interview Zach was seventeen, in his fifth year of secondary school and heading into his sixth. Both he and his father are concerned about his latest school results, which were poor, because he is struggling to pass his Highers and is also wondering about whether and how to continue his studies. He currently finds it hard to learn, despite having had good marks in the past. Thus, his aspirations are uncertain, although he would like to study something related to Biology, his favourite subject – perhaps Marine Biology.

5.3.1. The Impact of Racial Bullying on a Young Person in a Rural Village

In discussing his latest school results, Zach expressed disappointment with his mock exams, since he had previously done well:

‘I was doing well, but once I did my mocks it wasn’t as good. Because I got an A in Biology I only took it for 5th year to start off with but my Physics, my Maths and my English I failed, just borderline fail, just under fail and I got a high C in Chemistry’.

Zach believed that his choice of subjects required him to work harder: ‘I am studying Biology, Chemistry and Physics, Maths and English. I wanted to be harder for myself like in the fifth year’. Regardless of his disappointment with his latest school results, when thinking about possible goals he mentioned that he likes Biology, which he found easy, and was considering possibly studying Marine Biology.

‘I like Biology, it is ok, that is why I find it rather easy. I don’t know … something to do with Biology. It is probably my most favourite subject I was thinking about something like … I don’t know … Marine Biologist?’

Zach also elucidated how he sometimes found the process of learning difficult: ‘Sometimes I do not get the stuff … the process of learning is sometimes like hard for me’. Reflecting on this, Zach acknowledged that he was not asking for as much support as he should from his teachers. He explained that he felt he might hold back the class or interrupt if he asks a question:

‘I don’t intend to ask for help as much as I should because I feel like I am holding everybody back if I ask … I ask here and there but then sometimes I hold back because I do not want to interrupt too much’.

In addition, he mentioned that he felt uncomfortable when speaking in front of his peers because of the sense of being under pressure:

‘Especially in English class when you have to talk in front of the class … I don’t like stuff like that … I feel like under, kind of under pressure, like when people stare at you and all that stuff’.

It is clear that Zach does not want to be the centre of attention in class, which might reflect qualities of shyness, introversion, and lack of confidence and/or of self-esteem in his character. Perhaps he feels excluded or judged by his peers. We cannot know for sure.

As the interview progressed, Zach began to articulate issues of race at school. When talking about how he was treated at secondary school, he finally shared information about the bullying and racial abuse he had undergone from second year onwards. Zach was aware that his race had probably played a role in the bullying:

'Bullying, obviously, because my dad is from China, and so I am Chinese, as well myself … so like racial abuse. The first year was fine but then even fifth year every now and then I have to deal [with] like racial … with racial stuff'.

Moreover, Zach was able to document the nature of the racism he experienced and how the perpetrators operated. He explained that the attackers abused him when they were in a group and never individually, apparently becoming more confident when supported by their peers than when on their own:

'Because like they are in a group and they just want to show off and just because, when I notice, when I see them alone they don't say anything, but when they are in a group they really become cocky … just because they are in a group'.

Those who racially abused him varied over the years; it seemed that they were not always the same people: 'It is not the same. I have not been called names by the same group … one year is one group and the next is another'.

He stated that, at the moment, the racial abuse is not as intense as it used to be, and feels that his peers have become bored with it: 'Most of it has stopped now because they probably got bored with it but it used to be like quite a lot'. However, when considering the possibility of asking his teachers for help with the racial bullying, he argued that he was

mainly responsible for dealing with his issues at school himself, and did not expect any support from them. He even felt annoyed about being in the position of having to ask for help:

'I don't expect really anyone to help me with that (racism) … I have to deal with it myself … so that is where my thinking comes from. It is all me. Because I don't ask them for help as much as I should and like, it is really annoying'.

His way of dealing with racism was to ignore it and keep quiet about it. He put it out of his mind, although, eventually, he did think about asking for help and even got into some fights to defend himself: 'I have not asked because I let it go … once or twice I was tempted. In occasion, I have had a few fights'. From his words we can perhaps conclude that, at some point, the racial bullying became so serious that, despite wanting to solve the problem on his own, Zach considered asking for support. Zach's racist experience at school is not unique and has been documented through the work of Myers and Bhopal (2015: 3) in rural primary schools, as when they assert: 'Research suggests consistent racial conflict takes place through name calling and physical fighting towards BME … and newer migrant groups'.

Despite his words, overall, it seems that Zach's response to the experience of racism consists of silence (see Ferguson, 2003), his use of silence being probably the chief form of resistance and resilience in his rural community. Echoing his remarks about the role of the school and his teachers in relation to the racial bullying he underwent, he expressed frustration and stated that his teachers had been blind to it, which is why he dealt with this racism on his own.

'I think like in terms of racism and stuff even it is an offence and stuff there are methods to really like [support him -my words] … when I was being racially abused and that stuff they [teachers] did not dare to see it, they did not see it at all. They were blind … they just didn't see it. That is why I told myself I have to deal with it myself'.

Zach's answer may partially explain why he objected to asking for help at school and kept the experience of racism to himself. On this point, Caulfield et al. (2005) and Hill et al. (2007) agree that teachers have been perceived, overall, as ineffective in defending secondary pupils against racism at school. Given that this is in a rural environment, the chances of getting useful support from teachers or other agencies on race issues would appear to be poorer than in urban areas. Thus, Zach believed that his approach, namely dealing with the problem on his own, ignoring the racist attacks and keeping silent about them, was the key to stopping racist attacks by Scottish white peers. 'Now it has stopped. Now, they have stopped … so that is how'.

Perhaps Zach's understanding of his school results and of the racial bullying in the community had, additionally, been shaped by the life experience of his mother leaving the family home. Believing that everything depended on him, Zach made himself solely responsible for his failure or success at school.

'I think that because my mother left … I just gone [sic] more independent … I think that everything I do, that is on me. If I do something wrong, if I fail, it is my fault; if I was getting better it is on me'.

Indeed, he strongly believed that he needed to take care of himself as no one else was responsible for him; and that outlook probably applied also to the racial bullying he underwent: 'I feel like you have to take care of yourself … that is my problem'. His words illuminating on youth agency, the impact of the notion of 'individualisation' and resilience in youth lives (Beck and Gernsheim, 2002) and underpinned in the research by Schäfer (2007: 121).

Reflecting on whether the racial bullying could be having an impact on his self-esteem, Zach found the answer difficult, because he partly believed that the racial abuse by his peers did not matter to him, but at the same time he was uncertain about its possible consequences, and concluded that life must go on for him despite the racist attacks.

‘Self-esteem? It is hard to say because there is a part of me that says, ‘I don’t care what you think’, but … that’s why I don’t care what you think but … I carry on’.

In addition, Zach echoed, in regard to who was responsible for his difficulties at school, ‘myself … I should study but I just, like I just don’t want to ...’, indicating that he felt demotivated towards his studies and was currently considering his own role in all of this. Given Zach’s poor school results, compounded with racial bullying, it would be reasonable to think that there may be some connection between the two. It could be that the racism is undermining his confidence and thus, unsurprisingly, having an effect on his learning processes. This approach connects once more with CRT and, more precisely, with the work of Gillborn and Rollock (2011), who suggest that the reality of everyday racism in British schools has an impact on minority pupils’ attainment and their life aspirations. It further chimes with Solórzano’s (1998: 131) work, as we saw in Chapter Four, which discusses the impact of racist experiences and racial microaggressions on the victim’s self-confidence. When he argues: ‘racism disempowers us by inflicting individual consciousness with self-doubt’. Both these writings are pertinent here and might in part explain Zach’s latest poor results at school. Thus, we cannot discount the possibility that the experience of racism is responsible for Zach’s feelings of demotivation towards his studies and aspirations for the future.

As for his teachers, it seems that they either do not care or simply, according to Zach’s account, cannot see the racism he is undergoing, perhaps reflecting the absence and/or futility of training in matters of race and racism in rural secondary schools. Given that this is an issue related to institutional racism, I will expand the discussion of it in the next chapter when analysing institutional actors and their performance with the minority young people considered in this study.

5.3.2. Racism Shaping Future Aspirations

When considering a possible future job, Zach rejected the possibility of taking up his father's current occupation as a waiter:

'If I would like to work I would like to work where I don't need to deal with formalities … I don't like being suggested to [work at the restaurant -my words ... we have to be really formal and all that stuff … because I don't know … I just don't like it [being a waiter –my words]'.

Reflecting on his aspirations Zach felt undecided, although he thought he needed to keep on studying:

'I don't know … like my thought was that if I do not know what I was doing, like to keep on working, like exploring and stuff. I have no idea what I want to do'.

In addition, Zach, being regularly in touch with his mother, was aware that both his parents, despite being separated, had agreed about the high expectations they had for his future: 'My parents always like to say they want me to be something like a doctor or stuff like that'.

Surprisingly, regardless of all the racial bullying Zach underwent, he expressed a wish to stay in the Highlands, as he appreciated the quietness and beauty of the place and had some good friends:

'Because if I were to move I feel like in the end I would like to come back here because there are some nice guys. It is nice and peaceful and quiet'.

However, despite hoping to stay, the awareness that jobs in the town are not secure may, perhaps, force him to leave. This is an issue impacting on any young person living in a rural

area (see Shucksmith, 2004; Spielhofer et al., 2011). As Zach explained: 'I would like to stay living here [but] there are often not so many jobs. I would like to stay here but …'.

Given the latest disappointing results from his school and his recent demotivation, it is hard to know what options remain for Zach in pursuing his aspirations for the future. What we can be certain of is that his life experience had been abundantly marked by racism in the town, and that these experiences may have a cumulative impact on his current attainment and the repercussions for his future aspirations.

In addition, in relation to his identity, Zach feels neither Scottish nor Cantonese, but mainly English, because he was born in England. Indeed, he explains that he cannot speak Cantonese well:

'Mainly English because I was born in England. I can only speak English. I am really bad in speaking Cantonese. Very bad. I can understand it much better but I can't speak it too well. I don't feel Cantonese as well'.

Drawing on the above, we can conclude that Zach presented a story which included persistent racist bullying at school and in the rural community by some of his peers. This potentially had an impact on his school results and very probably on his self-esteem. His regular encounters with racism meant that he resorted to being silent (Ferguson, 2003) as a form of resistance and resilience. Zach's practice of ignoring the racist attacks, combined with his sense of being independent following his mother's departure, shows how he negotiated, on his own, the experience of racial abuse, and illustrates his journey of growing up in the rural Highlands. Zach's experience of racism also highlights the passive role of teachers, the school and other service providers who were accountable for him in the area. All this has probably shaped his confidence, his attainment and, thus, very likely, his future aspirations.

5.4. Story 4. Paul and Maria's story: White Hierarchy in a Rural Village

Maria and Paul were both born in the Highlands. Their mother was from Spain, while their father was White and Scottish born. They arrived in Scotland eighteen years ago and have lived for the past ten years in their current village, where Paul and Maria attend the nearest secondary school. Prior to the move to Scotland, their parents lived for a few years in their mother's country where she worked in a secure job after obtaining her degree. However, their father did not succeed in building his career there, which was why they moved to Scotland.

Since birth the siblings had spoken Spanish at home and English with their father's family and friends. This bilingualism was disrupted by advice from the school.

At the time of the interview, Maria was sixteen. She took physically after her mother with the dark hair and distinctive features of southern Europe. Her Spanish name also signified her difference. She was currently in her fifth year of secondary school and preparing for her sixth. She was not taking any of her Highers, having been absent from school for more than a year, following an illness. Although the nature of the illness was not fully disclosed by Maria, her mother documented that, in addition to some physical problems, Maria had also had difficulty with her peers at school. Maria aspires to study traditional Scottish music in the future.

At seventeen, Paul was two years older than Maria at the time of the interview. His school results were sufficient to gain him entry to a prestigious university, where he aims to study a degree in Science. In addition to his schooling, Paul was working part-time at the local leisure centre, in order to meet his expenses and save some money for his future studies.

5.4.1. White Hierarchy in a Mixed Family?

From a young age, Maria had a sense of being an outsider, recalling that she used to wish she was not 'so different'. In contrast, thinking about her difference at the time of the interview, Maria said 'I quite like it now'. Reflecting on this shift from the past and valuation of her difference from the norm, Maria explained that she saw herself as 'more interesting' as a result of her racial background.

She further stated that valuing difference extended to other people she knew, including her best friend who is from Germany and, she proudly observed, 'is also into Morocco so she can speak some Arab [sic]'. Similarly, Maria has come to see her own bilingual skills as positive, arguing, 'I really like it now, and I feel quite lucky, but I think, maybe at one moment, when I was younger I didn't want to be different'. She noted that there were only two students in the school who were bilingual: herself and her best friend. Unsurprisingly, given the change in her views, Maria's response as to what she would like to change from her school was, 'I'd like my school to have more people from different cultures and loads of opportunities to travel'. She continued: 'It would be good if we learn languages. Because, for example, in Germany they learn English and German from really young age, so they are fluent in both languages'.

Identifying the specific reasons for Maria's dramatic change in perspective on the value of diversity is difficult. It is potentially a result of a range of coalescing factors including the influence of her German friend and her own maturation. She has also had more positive experiences of the community in recent years as a result of her involvement with a Gaelic music group. With this group, she has been exposed to a broader range of people and places, playing at festivals in other parts of the country. Perhaps it has also given Maria the opportunity to develop enough confidence to feel better accepted by her peers and within the Scottish community.

Linking Paul and Maria's story with the narrative we discussed concerning microgeographies and the intersection with race, or with an imaginary white Scottish rural landscape, Maria and her family are, possibly, experiencing a form of 'White hierarchy'

(Garner, 2006). Thus, to understand Paul and Maria's story we need to introduce the idea of whiteness, the different levels of exclusion and inclusion within a hierarchy, and the way White privilege operates. As we saw in chapter two in connection with the ideas of Leonardo (2012), the concept of race, and more particularly whiteness, offers the opportunity to explore in depth how symbolic concepts based on race, and consequently on whiteness, are perpetuated across generations and become legitimated during the progress of colonialism in Northern Europe and the United States. Accordingly, as Garner argues (2006: 2), through the idea of whiteness, and more precisely white hierarchy, 'racism can impact freedom of all racial groups, and, thus, whiteness shows how actors can be oppressed and oppressing' depending on how they position themselves around the concept of 'White privilege'. Consequently, although Maria is white like her brother, it seemed that her distinguishable, southern European features, her dark skin and unusual name, and her potentially different attitudes placed her at a different point from Paul on the scale of whiteness. As Garner (ibid.) argues, 'white Europeans can also be racialised in the process of constructing national identities'.

Accordingly, Maria's distinctive features, when racialised, probably made it more difficult for her than for her brother Paul to disguise her difference at her rural school and in the community. Logically, Maria's Spanish distinctive looks would not exempt her from racialisation and feeling 'othered' within this hierarchy. Her appearance, and probably that of her mother, perhaps played a role in placing her lower down in the hierarchy of whiteness than Paul and their white Scottish father (see Garner, 2006: 267), and thus generated a feeling of being discriminated against.

Given Maria's difficulties in negotiating her difference at school, it would be pertinent to question the role of her teachers in dealing with the process of racialisation and 'othering' she underwent there.

5.4.2. The Denial of Difference in a Rural Village

Paul and Maria's family had used their mother tongue at home in the past; both parents wanted their children to be bilingual. However, when Maria experienced some issues at school, coinciding with the arrival of a third child with Down's syndrome, the family gave up their practice of bilingualism.

Maria struggled at school over a long period of time. Her mother stated: 'Maria has got lots of free periods because she was ill for a while in hospital and lost a year and five months. She was in a wheelchair'. Before then it seemed that Maria had problems with some of her peers, as the mother also commented: 'She had a problem with her friends; the friends before didn't like her'. To complete the picture, Maria was the sibling who felt closest to her mother's culture. Her mother stated: 'Maria really likes Spain, she feels very comfortable when she is there, it felt like at home for her'.

We can elucidate what happened to Maria, her experience of difference, and the rejection she felt through Young's (1990) concept of the logic of identity. This concept describes how mainstream identity, in our story of white rural Scottishness, can operate by denying or repressing difference. Maria probably felt 'othered' and discriminated against because of her visible difference as Spanish. Because the interesting paradox of the logic of identity is that, despite aiming to erase or reduce difference, it is simultaneously responsible for generating 'othering' and excluding the different. Thus, in the case of Maria, the feelings of rejection because of her difference, and of being 'othered', quite probably had an adverse impact on her confidence. The experience of peer discrimination, together with the school's comments which problematised the use of Spanish at home, would probably have reinforced the siblings' desire not to be different. That is, arguably, why Maria explained that she had not wanted to feel different in the past.

The denial of difference among young people in rural areas is particularly underpinned by the work of Myer and Bhopal (2015), and, in addition, extended to minority adults through the research of Chakraborti and Garland (2004, 2006) and of de Lima (2007). These

scholars all agree that denial of difference is particularly acute in rural contexts, as we saw in Chapter Three.

In Chapter Two, Cummins (2001) discusses how those responsible for education, starting with educational authorities, tend to 'worry that linguistic, cultural, "racial" and religious diversity threaten the identity of the host society'. In our story, Maria's teachers were negotiating her difference by encouraging the family to fit into the rural community in the expectation that 'that will make the "problem" disappear' (Cummins, 2001: 1).

No doubt the discouragement of bilingualism by the school reinforced Maria's (and Paul's) negative view of difference, and simultaneously was reinforcing whiteness through White privilege and legitimising White hierarchy (Delgado and Stefancic, 2001; Guess, 2006; Garner, 2006; Leonardo, 2009) as a consequence of their situation as a Scottish/Spanish family in a rural village.

Of the two siblings, Paul was the one who identified as Scottish, saying 'I feel Scottish' and explaining, when reflecting on which language(s) he could speak:

'English and I speak a little bit of Spanish. I can understand it but I can't speak it quite as well. My cousins do understand English so if I can say it in English I say it in English'.

In addition, when asked about racial difference at his school, Paul commented that the majority were White Scottish but that they were sometimes joined by new young people from England. He could not recall any cultural difference, explaining that:

Friends and people arriving at this school are usually from England or somewhere so there is not really so much of a difference so there is still sort of the same culture.

Eventually, when reflecting on the possibility of Polish peers attending his school, Paul realised he had overlooked them and added: 'Oh yes, there are quite a few Polish pupils … I forgot about them'. Paul elucidated that Polish pupils tended to gather together at school:

‘They stay to themselves, most time for joining the football team or the sports team. They keep themselves to themselves’.

Finally, when considering any possible race issues in the village, Paul claimed:

‘This place is used to people coming from other countries. They may take a bit longer to settle in … but, as I said, everyone here is pretty friendly, people trust each other … it’s not like in big cities that you cannot talk to everyone … here is like you can talk to anyone, very friendly’.

There are a number of key themes of interest in Paul’s quoted remarks and all of them relate to White privilege and White hierarchy. The first is found in his assertion of preference for the use of English over Spanish. The second appears when he initially overlooks his Polish counterparts, only seeing the hegemonic white British population. He seems to be negotiating difference through the denial of difference. Thus, in his denial of difference, the process of othering renders the Polish students invisible, placing them outside the Scottish and British White privilege context. This inability of Paul to see his invisible minority peers, as Arshad et al. (2005) have pointed out, is a common issue in Scottish schools. Such invisibility of white minority young people is problematic as it means that xenophobia and racism remains unacknowledged for them and, as Paul demonstrated, they tend to remain forgotten in educational spheres.

The third and final theme emerges when Paul says overtly in the interview, ‘I feel Scottish’. In claiming this (white) identity Paul also adopts what CRT (for example Delgado and Stefancic, 2001) labels ‘White privilege’, which enables his process of ‘othering’ those whose identity he perceives as different from his Scottishness. His privilege makes his position one of no problems here (Donald et al., 1995) and is probably the main theme, as Paul, through his privilege, does not see himself as racially different in the village. That is the privilege of White hierarchy. He has embraced Scottishness through the choice of a Scottish identity, made possible by the physical resemblance to his white Scottish father.

This has facilitated Paul's distancing of himself from issues of difference, and by extension his denial of difference (Young, 1998).

An example is when Paul distances himself (along with the wider White Scottish student population at his school) from the Polish students and simultaneously denies any race problems at school or in his town. In Paul's words, this Polish student group is positioned as having chosen to 'keep to themselves' and are consequently viewed as 'outsiders' in relation to the norm of Scottishness and Britishness that he observes in the village.

Consequently, there seems to be a contradiction between Paul's denial of race problems at school and his account of the lack of interaction between Scottish young people and their Polish or Eastern European peers. At least Paul's words demonstrate an ethnic tension around the Polish pupils at school, a theme also encountered by de Lima and Wright in their work Welcoming Migrants? Migrant Labour in Rural Scotland (de Lima and Wright, 2009).

We can conclude that Paul and Maria's story reflects two significant ideas. The first is about White hierarchy and how the two siblings have negotiated this differently in their village. This negotiation concerns the social position they have been permitted in relation to White privilege in their rural village. The second is about the denial of difference, when Maria first openly rejects her own difference and Paul cannot recall any diversity in his school, forgetting about his Polish peers. This denial encompasses the 'no problems here' stance adopted by Paul.

For Paul, his physical features, including blond hair, blue eyes and resemblance to his father, as well as his British name, have allowed him to fully embrace White privilege, positioning himself at the top of the hierarchy. By contrast, Maria's visible difference as Spanish, taking after her mother with dark hair and skin and having a Spanish name, has led to her being racialised and 'othered' as different, and to having developed feelings of rejection and discrimination in the past. For Maria, the experience of difference has been a painful one, perhaps even responsible for a long-lasting crisis. Thus, of the two siblings, Paul is the one who has succeeded most at school and in the community.

Overall, rurality has played a significant role in the understanding of whiteness in this story. Through a dearth of interaction with different cultures, rural contexts have diminished opportunities to perceive difference as having a positive value. Instead, difference is something to be wary of, to represent the 'other', with the consequence of alienating those who are different, like María.

5.5. Story 5. Eva's story: a Young Female Migrant Worker in the Highlands

Eva arrived in a remote town in the Highlands in 2011. She was 22 at the time of the interview. She came from Lithuania, joining her boyfriend, who was already working in the area. After a while, Eva separated from her Lithuanian partner and decided to stay in the new place while he went back to their home town. In the past, before arriving in Scotland, Eva had studied to become a secretary, her ambition being to progress and achieve a secretarial or administrative career in the future. As she spoke three languages, she hoped that her linguistic skills would help her to achieve this goal. Currently, Eva was combining studies with a full-time job in the tourist industry. She attended English classes at the local college and had also applied for and been accepted to do an HNC at another college in the south of Scotland. She was excited about the prospect of leaving the rural town and moving to a big city.

5.5.1. 'Here I Cannot Grow Up': Issues of Rurality in a Remote Village

At the time of the interview, Eva expressed her satisfaction at having passed an exam to study for an HNC in a large town in the south of Scotland. Back in her home country she had studied at a college for four years to become a secretary, and she wished to work in that field in the future. As she explained:

‘I studied there. I have studied four years at college as a secretary like a profession. Last year I finished in my country doing my exam. I know I like working with papers with letters and I would like a future job in an office.’

Documenting her life in the town, Eva described how she worked at a hotel as a waitress and relaxed at the leisure centre. ‘I work in a hotel as a waitress and I go to the leisure centre for swimming, gym, sauna and that is where I rest’. When asked about her working hours, Eva explained: ‘In wintertime it may be thirteen hours per week. But in summer time, forty, fifty hours … so busy in summer time’. Reflecting on her aspirations, Eva explained why she wanted to leave the rural town and move to a big city. She felt that the place was not big enough to allow her to mature and pursue her goals, which included not being a waitress all her life.

‘I want to change this town. It’s too small, I want bigger. That is why I am going … I don’t want to be a waitress all my life. I need something … I need to grow up … because here I cannot grow up.’

Eva’s employment in a hotel was probably one of the few options available if she wanted to work in the town, a circumstance potentially shared by most migrant workers arriving in the Highlands, where the range of jobs they can apply for are mainly in the fish processing, farming and building industries. According to Solomos (2003) and Gilroy (2004), these are the jobs traditionally rejected by the local population, because they find them either too hard, or too badly paid, or both. Thus, the circumstances surrounding Eva’s job can be explained through the concept of the racialisation of jobs. Solomos (2003) has described this as the limited range of jobs migrant young people can have access to in the dominant culture. The opportunities available are shaped by race relations, and the options for accessible employment are constrained by workers’ racial or ethnic origins. Following Fox et al. (2012), it is argued that the reality of job racialisation is responsible for negotiating racial categories, which are constantly changing in our society. Accordingly, Linda’s racial position may move from a lower into a higher position as she, perhaps, progresses in her career. Thus, the concept of racialisation needs to be constantly revisited and adapted in accordance with these changes.

To illustrate the above, despite the dissatisfaction Linda expressed regarding her current employment, she also made explicit that working conditions could be worse for the Black Asian peers working in the same hotel. Thus, Linda may have benefitted from membership of a privileged racial category when compared to her Black Asian co-workers, as we will see next.

5.5.2. Discriminatory Working conditions for Black Young People in the Highlands

Through her job, Eva met some Asian young people in the hotel, giving her the opportunity to witness the unfairness of their employment conditions. She stated that they were not well paid, worked too many hours and did not have enough holidays.

'I know it is very hard for them, [because] for Indian people [is hard- my words] to get a visa and they work here with a contract. People who work with me they have a contract for five years and they don't have off days'.

By contrast, Eva mentioned that she felt privileged in her working conditions and holidays, and observed that, unsurprisingly, the Asian workers all wanted to leave the place when they finished their contract.

'I have one day off in summer time and in winter two, three days off per week. And I work hard in these hours but they work harder. It is very hard for them. When they finish their contract they all want to leave'.

Eva gave an example of the discriminatory working conditions of Black Asian minority young people, with longer shifts, the type of jobs they could access, and their lower salaries: 'They work eleven months a year. Maybe they sometimes have two days holidays a month. And then work, work, work. It is crazy'.

All these unfair working practices are apparently addressed in local Council policies, as presented in the latest Race Equality (2012) Programme of the Highlands and Islands Council. This is something that will be discussed in the next chapter.

Additionally, Eva's account of the extreme working conditions of Black Asian peers was recently backed up by the press (*BBC News*, 24. 07. 2015; *The Times*, 25. 07. 2015), in a report on the malpractices and illegal working conditions imposed on Indian young people in a hotel in the area.

We can conclude that Eva's story illustrates how, through racialisation, the type of labour offered to migrant young people, and the work opportunities available in a rural town, could restrict their life aspirations. It shows how limited job opportunities, together with rural issues and her own agency in pursuing higher aspirations, have resulted in Eva's wishing to leave the rural town and move to a big city further south.

In addition, her story provides evidence of the way racialisation can operate in her favour, as she is a White Eastern European. The exploitation of Black Asian peers at the hotel where she worked reveals discriminatory practices, including long shifts and few holidays, when compared to her own working conditions. Her narrative has made a contribution by giving a picture of how unfair working practices add an additional dimension to the life experiences of migrant worker Black and Asian young people within a rural context.

5.6. Story 6. Linda's Story: the Impact of Lack of Agency in a Young Person at a Rural School

Linda's story began in an Eastern European country. Her parents were looking for better job opportunities and decided to move to the Highlands at the beginning of the century. The family came to live in the village in different stages, the father arriving first, followed

by the mother with a younger sister, and finally Linda in 2011. She was then fifteen. Linda could not speak much English when she arrived and because of that, the school initially placed her in a lower year. Despite being two years older, Linda was in the fifth year and was a classmate of Sara who was fifteen (Story 2). In addition, through a youth worker, she had been attending several groups and been active on youth committees in the Highlands.

At the time of the interview Linda was seventeen. She was adamant that she wanted to go back to her own country and seemed to have discussed this matter previously with the youth worker. Linda's interview was conducted in front of the youth worker. As a result, Linda's participation in this research was limited. Nevertheless, what she said and her behaviour (Nairn et al., 2005) provided very useful information for this thesis. Indeed, during her interview she was in tears over her wish to leave the country. Even the presence of the youth worker, who most of the time insisted on providing answers for her, could not prevent Linda's tears from giving evidence of her distressing experience. Thus, Linda's participation in this study has been brief and yet has yielded excellent evidence of how cultural shock, together with, perhaps, awkward practices by service providers, can produce disquieting and unnecessary experiences for a minority young person.

5.6.1. Cultural Shock Impacting on Linda: Exploring Processes of Inclusion in a Rural School

Regardless of all the social activity Linda had been involved in with the youth worker, when reflecting on her future and her aspirations she explained that she missed 'everything' about her country. In addition, Linda felt that the school in the Highlands was too big and compared it to the one she had attended back in her country, which was 'smaller than this school'. From the beginning, Linda made clear her wish to return to her country in Eastern Europe, because she wanted to 'finish my school and then, maybe, go to another school to learn photography there'.

Encouraged and guided by the youth worker, Linda was attending several activities run by a youth charity and her school. She had a voice in the Youth Parliament, helped in the youth café and also attended several sports committees; she explained: 'I am on the Sports and tennis committee, youth cafe and youth voice'. Indeed, Linda had represented her area in the Youth Parliament for five months. Nevertheless, Linda's participation in the interview was mainly monosyllabic and full of silences. It was unclear why this was the case. It could have been due to the youth worker's presence, or perhaps Linda was merely shy.

Given these factors it was difficult to assess her feelings. However, at the beginning of the interview the youth worker said to Linda: 'Speak up a bit just so that Tricia can listen in to what your answers have been'. This implied that the youth worker was putting herself in a position of power over Linda and was perhaps not listening to Linda's real needs.

In addition, on her arrival Linda went through the experience of being placed in a lower year at school, because of her scant knowledge of English. Indeed, Linda was in the same year as Sara (Story 2), despite two years' difference in their ages; it would be reasonable to question what impact this experience might have had on Linda. It might mean that she felt humiliated to be with pupils younger than herself. Furthermore, what cultural shock had she experienced at arrival and how did her school help to alleviate this? Byram (1995: 30), citing K. Oberg (1960), has described cultural shock as the 'adjustment to new cultural environments'. He reminds us that it is important to anticipate the possible aftermath for young people of moving into a new culture, and to recognise their needs. He continues, 'this is particularly important when they are separated from their friends' (Byram, 1995: 30), as may have happened in Linda's case.

In view of Linda's tears, it seemed the school's way of doing whatever they could to help Linda was not working. Perhaps, as suggested by 'Count Us In' (2009a), Linda felt undervalued when placed at a lower level. Or maybe Linda could not overcome her culture shock after two years in the area. Or could it have been a mixture of both? What we know for sure is that Linda left to go back to her country.

To conclude, Linda was not very vocal during her interview, but she was clearly upset and cried a lot. Her desire to return to her home country, coupled with her tears, tended to suggest that she was not happy with her current experience, either of schooling or of living in the Highlands. Not being part of the age group in her class, together with her lack of English, has meant that Linda has probably not integrated into her new life as easily as she otherwise could have. The presence and constant interruption of the youth worker did not assist the interview process. While the youth worker may have tried to be helpful by interjecting, she was at the same time silencing Linda: perhaps inadvertently, or perhaps not.

Conclusion

The narrative emerging from these stories has demonstrated how issues of race, racism, ethnicity, rurality and age intersect and appear to shape the life experiences and aspirations of the eight young participants in this study.

The three common themes that connect all the young people's narratives demonstrate that issues of isolation are particularly acute for those who were born abroad. The isolation results from living in a rural area; additionally, these young people experience isolation and exclusion due to being perceived as 'other' by their neighbours on the basis of their race, ethnicity and/or national origin. Thus, their narratives tell of experiences of explicit racism in two of the stories, and of feelings of discrimination and not belonging, and a wish to leave, in five of the eight stories.

The second theme relates to how most of the young people in this study experience school as a site of exclusion, even violence, instead of a place of inclusion and safety. That school appears to play an active role in reinforcing the young people's exclusion perhaps reflects a limited knowledge and understanding of race, racism and difference on the part of teachers and other educational and youth professionals in these rural institutions: the

institutional actors accountable for the young people. This is something I will elaborate on in a next chapter when analysing stakeholders.

The final theme is related to the contrasting ways in which these young people negotiate the exclusions they experience. Thus, it is important to see these young people as active agents who deploy a range of resources to cope with, and sometimes to rebel against, their isolation and exclusion in their communities. Their stories should stimulate reflection on the need to provide, when absent, and to enhance, when in place, consistent and compelling anti-racist practices for minority youth on the part of practitioners and local authorities across rural Scotland. They also constitute a call for further research in the area in the future.

6

Chapter 6: Institutional Actors and Parents in the Scottish Highlands

'*We have to be aware that, consciously or unconsciously, we are all born with a kind of racist attitude and that's all around the world.*'

(Margaret, English, third sector)

Introduction

The stories narrated by the black and minority ethnic young people in the previous chapter are made complete by the reports from their parents and the stakeholders working with and around them. Thus, encompassing accounts from parents, practitioners, and the third sector, these narratives offer an opportunity to reflect on how service providers, be they teachers, youth workers or career advisers, dispatch their responsibilities to the minority young people.

The chapter examines how some practitioners, or what I call institutional actors, may make it difficult for the young people to gain the support and encouragement they need to navigate safely through their life experiences and to achieve their career goals. Indeed, the

lack of understanding of race, racism and discrimination may be creating a problem for both the parents and the young people in the rural community.

An institutional actor in the context of this study is defined as an individual placed in a position of power with certain authority over young people and a potential role to exercise in relation to them. The role of institutional actor may develop during the process of working with them, when the practitioner may or may not have the ability to negotiate essential resources meant to help young people achieve their higher aspirations. Consequently, when the relationship with the young person deteriorates, perhaps through the exercise of poor practice with her or him, which leads to neglecting or even undermining the young person, the individual becomes an institutional actor.

From the adult accounts in this study there have emerged three main themes. First, the disparity between the practitioners' view and what the young people expect in terms of the purpose of schools and EAL and ESOL provision. Second, the silences generated around race and racism at schools and the rural community, and the potential connection of this factor with literacy and training in race equality aspects of service provision in the Highlands. Finally, the divergence between what current race equality policies aspire to and practices on the ground, as reported by some of the adults participating in this research.

6.1. The Purpose of Schooling: a Genuine Welcome in the Highlands?

When the narratives of parents and third sector associations, including practitioners, about the purpose of schools and EAL and ESOL provision are contrasted, there is evident disagreement.

For parents and third sector agents, schools are expected to be places where young people belong and feel safe: an expectation previously conveyed by young people's stories. Such

a belief about schools is not absurd, after all. Indeed, educational policies in Scotland have long supported the idea of schools as places of safety and inclusion for all, and even more, as spaces where race equality is practised. For example, a paper by the Scottish executive called 'Focusing on Inclusion and the Education' states: 'The school actively works towards a safe, anti-discriminatory environment, valuing diversity and promoting equality ... An inclusive school is a place where everyone belongs, is accepted' (Scottish Executive, 2006:6).

Additionally, HMI published a report called 'Count us In' (2009), which recommended improved procedures for newly arrived children and young people in Scotland. The document was based on the Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000: 6), deeming race discrimination illegal and placing 'a general duty on public authorities'. The document was intended to establish good practices by all local authorities in Scotland. Indeed, it acknowledged that the practice regarding race relations at schools was uneven across local authorities in the country.

But for practitioners, working with newly arrived children and young people, integration meant learning English. Thus, procedures for enabling minority young people to feel that they were genuinely part of the school, and belonged there, seemed to be overlooked.

To back up the above claim, Margaret, a third sector agent working for an NGO in the Highlands, shared that in her view, the approach of schools and their teachers to newly arrived minority young people, was focused on 'the learning of English' as a priority. Meanwhile, the potential for a genuine welcome for the young people, whereby they might begin to develop feelings of belonging in the rural community, was neglected.

'When it comes to language, I think there is service provision in place at various levels. But when it comes to supporting in terms of young people feeling welcomed to settle here and that they belong, I think that's very different.'

Margaret's perception that learning English was prioritised over other potential needs was, indeed, documented in the impressions of two public sector agents and potential institutional agents: Isla, a career adviser and Fiona, a youth worker. As Isla explained:

'I think first and foremost for the young migrants is the language. If they can cope with the language or if they can get here with that, then the opportunities are there.'

Isla's words apparently ignore matters such as feeling welcome, or included, as Margaret stated. In addition, recognition of the young people's language and cultural background is absent. Potential experiences of racism, discrimination or alienation are not even mentioned which, whether conscious or unconsciously, has the consequence of silencing the voices of the young people.

On another occasion, when referring to Linda, the seventeen-year-old female from Eastern Europe, who arrived with no English, Fiona, the youth worker, stated: 'We would like Linda to get her English and her subjects first, so she's got them, and then build on them'. Fiona, as I referred in previous chapter, was the youth worker responsible for Linda. She was allocated to her because Linda had no English. As Fiona explained: 'I get all the young people who have no English and they come to me'.

In addition, the school had placed Linda in lower levels for her age, so,as Fiona explained, she could 'catch up with English'. She was fifteen at the time. When Fiona was questioned about Linda's lower placement she justified the school policy, saying:

'I think the school, it's not saying it in a bad way [referring to the lower level placement – my words], they're coming at it from an educational point of view. We took Linda in and put her into third year so that when the fourth and fifth years were on study leave she got six weeks in the school when there were only 200 pupils, so it was less intimidating for her.'

From Fiona's words, it could be reasonable to suggest that she was probably aware of how 'intimidating' it could be for a fifteen-year-old to be placed at a lower level, along with peers of thirteen. Given Fiona's awareness of the potentially negative experience for Linda in relation to her schoolmates, it seems that the school's procedure reflected poor practice in attending to the girl's needs.

Indeed, Linda's needs seemed to have been overlooked by the 'educational point of view' mentioned by Fiona. There was no awareness of how this stance of the school was, perhaps, undermining Linda's self-esteem. Indeed, the report 'Count us In' stated explicitly that placement at lower levels could be bad practice: 'We found that newly-arrived young people were placed in the lowest-attaining groups and classes. This sometimes led to low expectations of their achievement and lack of challenge of their work' (2009: 13).

Unsurprisingly, as we saw from her interview in the previous chapter, Linda tearfully made clear that she was adamant to return to her country. Linda's resolution was transparent despite Fiona's efforts to convince this study of the support and help provided to Linda: 'So the school have been very good at doing whatever we can to help Linda. Because they love Linda, we've done everything for her'. Thus, it would be pertinent to ask here what would have happened to Linda if the school did not love her. This assertion of love by the school, as documented by the youth worker, could perhaps be relevant when reflecting on the nature of the attention Sara received at the same school.

The 'learning of English comes first' approach was also encountered in an earlier small study, which explored the process of induction for minority young people by comparing a rural and an urban school in Scotland. Here the EAL provision was found to be fundamental among practices for induction of the black and minority young people, taking priority over racist matters at the rural school, and ignoring further needs of newly arrived pupils in the Highlands. One of the main findings was that the school was incapable of perceiving issues of racist bullying or practices of exclusion based on difference, or of acknowledging the feelings of isolation expressed by most of the minority young people who participated (Cacho, 2010, unpublished).

In addition, this thesis found practices of assimilation seemed to be a common drill at the schools in the Highlands: as, for example, when Liza, an Asian third sector officer, was requested by a school to instruct a young Chinese girl to look at her teachers. Liza explained to the teachers that the girl was listening to them but that because of her cultural background she was showing respect by not looking at them. It appeared that the teachers, being ignorant of Chinese educational practice, adopted ethnocentric western views instead and assumed that she was not listening. As Liza explained: 'The teacher says: "Can you make sure the child when we talk to her, she listens by looking at us". I said: "She's listening to you but not looking at you".'

The above incident epitomised a circumstance that is, plausibly, often repeated for lack of cognizance of other cultures in rural Scottish schools. In this case, teachers showed ignorance of the Chinese cultural principle that children and young people should avoid eye contact with adults as a sign of respect (see Klein and Chen, 2001; Hyson, 2004).

Liza, with the awareness of her own experience as a minority, was also explicit about the importance of recognising the young person's culture in addition to teaching English: 'The learning of English is one thing, but learning the culture and spreading the culture [of the minority young person] is just as important as the learning of the language [English] itself'. Indeed, Ladson-Billings (2009: 17) has explained the significance for teachers of being knowledgeable about the culture of their minority pupils, so as to engage with them and create space for motivating them in the classroom. Such practices assist in reducing ethnocentric postures in schools as Nayak (2010) in the UK has also confirmed.

Thus, there seems to be a disparity in the approach between what Liza believes is important for the minority young people and the responses from Fiona or Isla. For minority young people it is key that teachers can 'see them' and accept them as they are, rather than forcing them and assimilating them to what the teachers want them to be. Assimilation, thus, links with the idea we saw by Young (1990) about rejection of difference, when teachers, and other practitioners working with young people, stress the need to 'fit in' with the mainstream culture, while rejecting the young person's difference.

Assimilation was also well exemplified in story four as we saw in the previous chapter. Through the mother of Paul and Maria, siblings from a mixed Scottish-Spanish marriage, it was documented the process of assimilation the family underwent. Of the two, Maria was the sibling whose difference was visible. The mother explained how the school advised the family to stop using their mother tongue at home. The suggestion emerging after Maria, the younger daughter, was having difficulties at school. The mother said: 'They [teachers] were asking me "What language do you speak at home" and I said, "Spanish". They said, "She doesn't seem to understand what I am telling her"'.

Maria's mother did not question the school's advice. Instead, she thought it was the right thing to do. She even speculated that this could be Maria's problem and believed that the measure suggested by the school was working well for the family: 'I think it's her problem. I don't know, but, anyway, it [stop using Spanish – my words] works better'.

The fact that the school did not value Maria's mother tongue and culture, and instead treated them as problematic, probably had an impact on the family's navigation with 'difference'. Indeed, the school seemed to be sending the family the message: 'a language different from English was interfering with Maria's learning process'. Thus, the rejection of Maria's mother language was, possibly, shaping the family's relationship with 'difference' and, very likely, involving them in a process of assimilation. Indeed, there was no indication that the school played any role in easing Maria's changed sense of difference. On the contrary, the evidence suggests that her school had probably encouraged her to see difference as something to be avoided and muted. Thus, despite the good intentions of teachers in trying to help Maria, the advice to refrain from speaking Spanish had arguably contributed to Maria's, and probably the whole family, immersion in a process of denial of difference, at least in the linguistic sense.

This denial of difference was further evidenced when the mother described how her children avoided feeling different and overtly denied their Spanish background. The mother evidently believed that their reaction was a common one, stating: 'Children don't want to be different; they want to be all the same. That is why they didn't want to be different and tried not to talk Spanish'. Nevertheless, after Maria's interview, the mother showed

gratitude to this study because it enabled Maria to feel, perhaps for the first time, that her background and language were valued.

The story narrated by the mother of Maria and Paul is not uncommon. Teachers advising minority ethnic parents to refrain from using their mother tongue at home is a current issue that has been highlighted in previous works. As we saw in Chapter Two, Cummins (2001) and, additionally, Netto et al. (2001), both agree in reporting that assimilative practices at school, such as denial of the mother tongue and culture, are wrong methods that can undermine a pupil's confidence.

For Cummins (2001: 2), assimilation is akin to exclusion in various forms 'insofar as both orientations are designed to make the "problem" disappear', as we saw. And he suggests:

' The challenge for educators and policy-makers is to shape the evolution of national identity in such a way that the rights of all citizens (including school children) are respected, and the cultural, linguistic, and economic resources of the nation are maximized. To squander the linguistic resources of the nation by discouraging children from developing their mother tongues is quite simply unintelligent from the point of view of national self-interest and also represent a violation of the rights of the child' (Cummins, 2001: 3)

Cummins's words, perhaps, reflect how teachers and the school response can be part of the problem in Maria's, and probably, extended to her family. How can Maria's education be inclusive if the teachers have had in mind and feared, in regard to Maria's issues at school: that by being allowed the use of the mother tongue Maria might not learn at school or might not be assimilated into the Scottish identity of the rural community?

Indeed, Cummins (ibid.) argued that by denying bilingualism, the school and teachers are being, perhaps, 'unintelligent' and sending the wrong message to the pupils affected: that is, that if they want to be accepted by their teachers and their peers they have to renounce 'any allegiance to their home language and culture'. Perhaps that could explain why Maria

opted to learn the Scottish fiddle and to join a group playing traditional Celtic music: in order to better fit in, or perhaps not.

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Underpinning the above, Margaret, another NGO worker, believed that the mainstream white community in the Highlands expected incomers to assimilate and erase their identity. As she stated:

'About the integration, I feel strongly that I think that there is a feeling with the Highlands that minority young people should integrate. They should become like us or even assimilate … that's something that I feel we need to make clear.'

For Margaret, respecting minority young people's cultural background was seen as crucial for a true understanding of inclusion by service providers in the Highlands. She found it fair that they should be able to preserve their culture and identity: 'I think they have a right to carry on with their own traditions and have their own identity'.

Going back to the initial idea here exploring the understanding of a genuine welcoming at schooling and at the rural community in the Highlands, we can see Margaret's rejection of assimilative approaches was linked to what she saw as a dearth in practices for welcoming minority young people arriving in the Highlands. She felt that such practices were in their infancy, and explained:

'I do believe that the Highlands is a little bit far behind in terms of genuine welcome. There's a concept that we need to have migration. But a lot of the folk we're in touch with that, they feel they are not really welcomed.'

In addition, Margaret's perception, stated above, reflects a contradiction between policies launched by the Council to attract minority youth because they are needed in the region, and measures to make them feel welcome and accepted in the community. Indeed, requests from the local institutions are, probably, not in accordance with what the minority

population need, which is recognition of their culture and language through the schools and an effective anti-racist agency to protect them from racism.

The above issue connects with the work from the anthropologist Silverstein (2005: 364) when he discusses the contradictions between the necessities of a global capitalist system 'for socially disunited "abstract labour" and the demands of states for culturally unified "abstract citizens"'. Thus, the 'need to have migration' that Margaret mentions, as a means of boosting the economy in the area, seems to be colliding with the need for provision of adequate welcoming measures and a safe environment for the minority young people arriving to meet the economic need.

It could be argued that local institutions' abdication of responsibility for genuinely welcoming young people coming to live and work in the area is having some impact on how the local population positions itself around incomers. We can, perhaps, begin to see how stereotypes and attitudes of rejection may be reproduced through the absence of accountability by those in power: the institutional actors.

Cognizant of the importance of schools in tackling bias and prejudice against the minority population (see Osler and Starkey, 2002; Arshad et al., 2005), Margaret was attempting to develop an anti-racist project to work on with the schools. The idea was to improve potentially deficient views of incomers on the part of the local community. But she found that the project was probably going to be stymied by some teachers who apparently showed bias towards the minority community. As Margaret explained:

'We've tried to link in with schools but we've heard that there are some teachers who definitely have a chip on their shoulder, and they're not very open-minded and welcoming, and they do have a very, well a slightly, bigoted approach to incomers.'

Thus, attitudes of some teachers, those with a 'chip on their shoulder' as mentioned by Margaret, combined with a lack of confidence in general and in relation to minority pupils in particular, could be part of the problem of minority young people feeling unwelcome. This was also underscored by the experiences narrated by the young participants in the

previous chapter. Indeed, deficient practices and the perception of schools and teachers as potential institutional agents of exclusion and racialisation, disempowering and undermining the young people's confidence, have been common impressions conveyed by most of the young participants in this study. They relate that this is what they encounter, rather than spaces and agents offering support, or a sense of safety and belonging.

Here the work of Gillborn (2008: 198) is pertinent. He observes: 'Individual experiences, no matter how intimate and apparently random, can rarely be fully understood without reference to wider structures of power and oppression'. The wider structures of power and oppression are exercised here by the potential institutional actors in the Highlands, those who have the power to impose different outcomes on young people's life experiences and aspirations.

Creese and Blackledge (2010) discuss an ecological approach to minorities in a rural area, an approach that looks at the already existing languages, those of the new minorities arriving or first generation of young people, alongside the new language, English. Their idea is based on van Lier's (2004) ecological outlook, which suggests a need to consider the development of new languages along with that of the existing ones. The intention is, once more, to introduce pedagogical methods that provide an opportunity for minority young people to feel that they belong.

Drawing on the above, it seemed that schools and EAL and ESOL provision were not offering adequate support as needed and expected by the minority young people. Instead it seemed that these institutions and their agents were at the stage of assimilative practice.

According to the work of NALDIC (2004) and Arshad et al. (2005), together with current educational policies in Scotland and in the Highlands such as the 'Curriculum for Excellence', the role of schools is to provide a space for equal opportunities for every pupil, regardless of race or ethnicity. Consequently, practices prioritising the learning of English without valuing the young person's background seem problematic, reflecting assimilative

and ethnocentric attitudes on the part of schools and of EAL and ESOL provision for minority young people in the Highlands.

First, this is because schools seem to ignore other essential needs of the young person, such as recognition of their culture, help in finding new friends or, perhaps, support with feelings of isolation, if any. Indeed, it is plausible to think that alienation is probably a common experience for minority young people living in rural areas because of their geographical remoteness (Scottish Government, 2010) and the difficulty of gaining access to services.

Second, it is because practitioners overlook potential racial bullying at schools and in the community, whereas the role of teachers in matters of race and racism is crucial in tackling it. Here I refer to the work of Castaño (2008: 315), who argues that, for teachers, the policy is that 'race either doesn't matter or doesn't really exist and to continue schooling in a business as usual fashion'. When this position is adopted by teachers, as adults in power, it probably contributes to perpetuating racism in schools.

Thus, here I argue the need for a more humane approach to black and minority young people on the part of schools in rural areas. By such an approach practitioners need to acknowledge and recognise, not only their own language, as suggested by Creese and Blackledge (2010) and van Lier's (2008) ecological approach, but in addition the culture and agency of the young person.

Finally, the disparity of views between youth and practitioners about the purpose of schools has, perhaps, accounted for the silences generated over racism and issues of race arising in schools and the rural community. These silences can create a real problem for both the parents and the young people. Given the rudimentary responses to minority young people and the silences surrounding them, it is pertinent to ask what could lie behind these silences in the Highlands.

6.2. Exploring the Silences about Race and Racism in the Highlands

Silences appear as a recurring feature of this study. In respect to institutional actors, the silences play out as potential lack of confidence over race issues. They could be responses chosen by service provision to avoid getting it wrong. In addition, silences could plausibly be exacerbated by issues of rurality, namely, by the way geographical isolation, remoteness and consequently the difficulty of gaining access to services may further fuel the silences.

Indeed, the silences about racism, xenophobia and racial discrimination on the part of teachers, youth workers, career advisers, or any accountable practitioner, may or may not have aggravated the young people's experiences of racism, feelings of isolation and sense of not belonging. They may, plausibly, be shaping later life aspirations. We have seen how silences from teachers over racism or difference can impact on the confidence of a young person and limit her and his attainment at school and her and his ambitions, as was the case for Zafirah (story one) or Zach (story two). Thus, it is essential to explore the level of institutional actors' literacy in matters of race and racism in the Scottish Highlands.

6.2.1. Exploring the Literacy of Practitioners in Matters of Race and Racism in the Highlands

The scarce interaction with a multicultural world in the Highlands is probably a common feature of rural areas in the west. As Dawney (2008) puts it, the social construction of rurality needs an imaginary 'pure' white rural space where the presence of 'difference' or 'the others' tends to be seen as problematic and creates a wish to exclude 'the other' to preserve such 'purity'. Thus, multicultural illiteracy or lack of grammar in race and racism matters seems a dominant feature in the Highlands as in any other rural region.

To document the absence of multicultural diversity in the Highlands, Liza, the NGO officer, explained: 'I can tell you when I first arrived here in 1989/90, I cannot find one coloured face'. Liza is a visible Asian minority. However, the use she makes of the term 'coloured'

to refer to visible minorities needs some reflection here. Indeed, the word is considered offensive and old-fashioned, recalling, perhaps even reinforcing, the period of segregation of Black and visible people in the UK and the USA (*BBC News*, 27. 01. 2015). Thus, even those working to support minorities may be unconsciously betraying their own political understanding of race issues in the Highlands.

Nevertheless, Liza was explicit about how she felt racialised from the outset of her arrival; how through that process of racialisation she could perceive subtle gestures of rejection of her difference, that is, her skin colour: 'I'm yellow ... to them. So when I stood up they were taken back … so that's subtle'.

In addition, Liza could document overt forms of racism undergone by the Asians in the rural community; for example: 'Yeah, Chinky … Go home ... Mr Chips'. Such examples of verbal racial abuse, Liza recalled, were commonplace in the Asian community's experience of everyday life in the Highlands.

In the attempt to understand what possible images, stereotypes and prejudices about 'the other' could exist in the imagination of the local population, it was interesting to hear Isla's remarks about her perception of incomers. Isla was a White Scottish career adviser working in a remote town. As she explained:

'I think the nature of some of the nationalities; their outlook is very off-putting because the language is a bit guttural, so you think they're being cheeky. Their stance is maybe a bit threatening because maybe there's an initial distrust if you like.'

Isla's view of a multicultural world, may, perhaps, exemplify rural peers' images of 'the other', 'those different', in that she felt repelled by the 'outlook', 'language', and 'threatening' stance of some of the minorities in the town. In fact, Isla conceivably offers the local people a justification for exclusion of 'the other' on the basis of their 'looks', 'sounds' or 'stances'. In addition, she conveys the view of 'the other' as a potential threat

to the locals and suggests a reason to distrust some of the minority population (Young, 1990: 147).

Isla's attitude can be linked to the work of Dawney (2008: 4a), who argues that 'racism in rural areas is articulated largely in ways that suggest lack of contact and ignorance rather than direct experience of different cultures'. Thus, lack of familiarity with other cultures may turn into sweeping generalisations and stereotypes, showing how rural racism and xenophobia, or the 'fear of the other' that we observed, can result from absence of interaction with difference and can operate in subtle forms in everyday life in the community, as Liza explained.

Given the importance of acknowledging and recognising difference (Fraser, 2000) and valuing other cultures and languages, it could be crucial to explore the experiences of some practitioners working with young people in the Highlands.

6.2.1.1. Fiona: A Youth Worker with Race Literacy?

The case of Fiona, the youth worker accountable for Linda and indirectly for Sara, seems very different from Isobel's story. Fiona, who was White Scottish, was present during Linda's interview. Moreover, she provided most of the responses in Linda's place, as we saw. Indeed, Fiona's behaviour seemed to contradict her own words. This inconsistency emerged constantly during the interview.

For example, when explaining her relationship with Linda, she stated: 'I'm at the point [referring to Linda's level of English] where I won't answer for Linda'. However, she did. When the subject of Linda's aspirations was prompted and Linda's tears flowed in response, as we saw in the previous chapter, Fiona explained: 'I think she's a bit emotional because she's been telling me she is really missing Latvia and Linda is keen to go back and do her final year there'.

Linda's tears when asked about her aspirations showed a reaction potentially expressing discontent with her circumstances. It could be that, as we saw before, placing Linda in a lower level with younger people was not such a good idea; or she was simply still missing her country and friends, or both.

What came to light was, apparently, a tactless response to race and racism matters on the part of Fiona the youth worker. This was exemplified on several occasions during the interview: first when Fiona prevented the interview from taking place with Linda on her own; then when she provided answers in Linda's place. On the rare occasions when Linda attempted to answer, Fiona commanded her in a tactless manner to speak more loudly: 'Speak up a bit just so that Tricia can listen in to what your answers have been', as we saw. Finally, a possibly patronising stance towards Linda might be apparent from Fiona's explanation:

'She sometimes is limited in what she'll give us back. But now I try to help her because she's trusting me; I'm not trying to be hard, but I try to push her, so that she has a better understanding'.

From her words it is evident that Fiona was overlooking the possibility of any agency of Linda's own, perhaps perceiving Linda as limited by her lack of English. Even more significantly, throughout the interview there was no acknowledgement of Linda's cultural background.

When further explaining Linda's aspirations, Fiona took the same line as the school, supporting the contention that Linda should stay in school:

'I work very closely with the guidance staff and learning support, and they see that Linda is really bright and has a good opportunity here, and if she stays in school another year that she would do well in her subjects'.

In her discourse Fiona attempted to distance herself from the school's view that learning English and taking exams were a priority for Linda. Considering the unhappiness that Linda revealed, Fiona explained that she was not part of the school and wanted Linda to be happy:

'I'm not from the school; I'm there from an educational setting. I come from youth work and I would rather Linda do things that she's happy; your education is not everything'.

Again contradictions arose. On the one hand, Fiona seemed to endorse the school's 'English comes first' policy and to justify placing Linda some grades below her age, when she explained: 'They're [school] coming at it from an educational point of view, because they love Linda'.

On the other, Fiona acknowledged Linda's suffering and supported her wish to go back to her country and finish her studies there:

'To go back to Latvia is very much key to Linda. Linda kind of knows that she could stay on at school but right now she would prefer to go to Latvia and finish her exams and do a year there,'

Whether Fiona was aware of her inconsistency was uncertain. Perhaps it was having an impact on Linda's experience at school.

Later on, Fiona made some suggestions about what she thought would be advisable for any minority young person arriving in the Highlands:

'To come to school when they arrive here immediately, to get into our system, because I do think that this school it's the network where they're meeting their friends, it's a social net. It's the way they'll pick up English best by being around people who are speaking English all the time. And getting into as many clubs and activities and things that you can.'

In light of her words it would be pertinent to question here how the school performed in Sara's case. Sara, as we saw, was the fifteen-year-old Black Caribbean girl who attended the same school as Linda. Why was the school not succeeding in building the social network that Sara wanted and Fiona was suggesting? It could be, as we explained in the previous chapter, due to Sara's attitude and potential difficulty in communicating.

Nevertheless, despite any personal difficulties of Sara's, it seemed that she was, perhaps, being neglected by the school. Was the school cognizant of Sara's feelings of isolation and marginalisation? Could it be that the school community was unaware of Sara's struggle to find friends and of her feelings of isolation and marginalisation by her peers? Where Sara's race matters were concerned it was the mother who could document some of her thoughts about the school and her peers. As explained in the previous chapter, the mother stated that Sara felt she was being treated differently, perhaps because of her skin colour. Was the school aware of Sara's perception that her skin colour was causing her peers to be afraid of her?

Sara's perception of being an object of fear to her peers, as expressed through her mother, perhaps reflected a deficient practice by the school in matters of race. Instead of the silences surrounding Sara and the word 'black', the school might have mediated to support Sara in discussing her feelings of difference, eventually creating a space for including her peers in the discussion and, perhaps, helping in this way to mitigate her experience of alienation, isolation, and fear related to her difference at the school.

In view of the above, Fiona's account of Sara needs some consideration here. Fiona's knowledge of Sara was slight. Sara was mentioned during Linda's interview when potential participants were being sought. Although Fiona acknowledged her existence, she could not remember her nationality, saying: 'We do have Sara' and adding 'She's in the same group with Linda, they do hang about together'. Looking at Linda, she asked: 'Where's Sara from?'

Perhaps Sara was off Fiona's radar because she was not having problems with English. Furthermore, as shown in the previous chapter, Sara had mentioned that she did not communicate much either with Fiona or her teachers. Nevertheless, when Fiona described her job she made clear not only that she was in charge of young people with no English, as explained earlier, but additionally that she was responsible for young people who were perhaps struggling with self-esteem or having other emotional difficulties.

As she made clear: 'A lot of young people may be brought to me because they maybe lack confidence or self-esteem or they're very quiet, and so they want further opportunities'. Fiona expanded on the activities she used to motivate young people, including those with difficulties: 'very quiet, self-esteem...'

'So I will engage them in all, because I work closely with the guidance service and learning support. They'll often bring young people to me because I have activities every night. Because it'll be to get these young people included and respected and responsible and taking part, getting them out in the community, getting them seen doing things.'

According to Fiona's explanation, Sara might be suitable for the group she described. Why was Sara overlooked in this project of making the young people feel part of the community? Could it be that Fiona was not cognizant of Sara's feelings of isolation or just did not care? Could it be that Sara did not want to attend?

When reflecting on potential EAL training for Fiona, given the fact that she was working with minority young people like Linda and those having no English on arrival, she explained that she had not had any preparation for it. She said 'No', acknowledging her previous lack of contact with difference, and explained:

'For me if you've never worked with someone from another country, which I hadn't until I came across these people in [this school -my words], for me it's just all the time kind of thinking of out of the box types of ways of making it easier for them. So I wouldn't see Linda as any different, when I take her to do an activity, whether it's rock climbing or

anything, I will just know in my mind when someone's giving her the instruction of keeping her safe, that I will look out that little bit extra to know that when we're doing an activity that Linda has understood fully everything, the same way that anyone else has so that she can take part. And we've always known with Linda that she does fully understand what we're saying because she smiles.'

From Fiona's words we can understand that her interaction with minority young people is grounded on her personal understanding and potential experiences with differences and different responses. Perhaps her lack of training in matters of race and racism, possibly including that at the school Linda and Sara attend, explains some of the distress and anxieties encountered in Linda and Sara's stories.

Another possible explanation emerged when Fiona complained that she was accountable for too many young people:

'If I had more of me, because I have hundreds of young people, and I'm one person on 17 committees doing every day and every night, so if we would have more staff.'

Nevertheless, whether the difficulties with Linda and Sara are a consequence of the need for 'more staff' for the young people in the Highlands, or a lack of training in literacy in race matters, as Fiona explained, or a combination of both, the fact is that the school is accountable for its poor practices with both young people. This is suggested by the negative experiences they express through their stories, the wish to leave the country, the silences and tears reported in Linda and Sara's stories, and the distress they both expressed.

It seems that the silences over race and difference at Sara and Linda's rural school were having a negative impact on their current life experiences and, conceivably, on their future aspirations – bearing in mind that, of the two young people, Sara is, additionally, dealing with a distinctive skin colour as a Black Caribbean, and the extra difficulty this may signify for her life aspirations.

Drawing on the above, the work of Taylor, Gillborn and Ladson-Billings (see 2009) is pertinent here. As these scholars explain, there is a belief that race matters are better not discussed in schools, the assumption being that voicing race issues among pupils would make things worse for minorities. Here I argue for the significance of opening up spaces and periods in schools devoted to addressing and discussing racism, including issues such as problematising whiteness, discrimination against difference, and feelings of exclusion. This should be done regardless of the presence or absence of minorities in rural communities, in order to raise awareness of race equality matters.

The denial of racism, or the 'no problems here' stance mentioned in earlier works, was also encountered during this study. This was probably epitomised by the case of Isla the career adviser, which is explained next.

6.2.1.2. Isobel: The Relevance of a Youth Worker Coming from a Minority Ethnic Background

Isobel was from a country in the South of Europe. She was the youth worker accountable for Lala and Zafirah. Isobel had the opportunity to foster the sisters, encouraging them through performance and creative activities, after the mother left the family home in a remote town.

Isobel seemed to succeed in boosting Lala's confidence, something that occurred simultaneously while Lala was undergoing the process of racialisation and low expectations at school. Lala's account in the last chapter explained how Isobel was significant in the achievement of her aspirations as a singer. Isobel confirmed that she backed Lala up: 'I always told her she was good at acting, and she was good at singing'.

Given the poor marks Lala received at her school, her aim of going to college to study music seemed in jeopardy. Isobel explained: 'It's been very hard to get her for the HNC in music'. However, between Lala's persistence and Isobel's support, Lala finally succeeded in her ambition.

Isobel also pushed Lala to participate actively in a youth organisation in the Highlands, which proved to be a good idea: 'I almost forced Lala to become part of it and then later she loved it'.

Meanwhile, Isobel tried to involve Zafirah in activities similar to Lala's, but did not achieve the same results – perhaps because of Zafirah's attitude, as discussed in the previous chapter. Indeed, according to Isobel, Zafirah was shy and introverted:

'I tried to involve Zafirah, and she was involved for a wee while, but she has a completely different personality to Lala, and she is shy and quite introverted. So she doesn't want to be involved. It's hard to get her to talk in public.'

At the time of Zafirah's interview, she felt reluctant to raise any race issues, as we saw. Perhaps, as Zafirah insisted, they were non-existent. Nevertheless, Isobel's words suggest to us that the girl's introversion and shyness may have been playing a part in her process of racialisation and may, perhaps, have explained her difficulty in vocalising potential racial experiences and feelings of discrimination, as Lala did.

Talking about race equality, Isobel explained: 'Yes, there's a silence, a complete silence about it. Race equality is a silence around here.' Indeed, Isobel added that she had witnessed how minority young people were having issues with local peers: 'I know for a fact that other young people from minority ethnicity are having difficulty with locals'.

Referring to these difficulties of minority communities, Isobel mentioned that she felt they were seen as a threat by the locals: 'I think now things are getting worse for ethnic minorities in the Highlands. Because of this perception of they're coming to get the jobs'.

Isobel was a minority person from Southern Europe who had lived in the Highlands for over twenty years. For Isobel, the experience was of persistent racial and verbal abuse. She recalled diverse incidents in the area, vocalising some racial attacks and microaggressions

(Solórzano, 2010). Most of the time the perpetrators were local children and young people, as she explained: 'I have problems all the time. They [local young people, my words] continuously take the mickey'.

Isobel explained how as a youth worker she had to work with the local young people and how she thought they were ridiculing her, trying to reproduce her way of speaking. She felt that in the long term these actions were having a negative impact on her well-being and she believed the behaviour was racist:

'To begin with it didn't upset me but one day it really did upset me and I saw the boys in the street and it made me want to cry. So to try to explain that to young people that they really don't think that they're being racist. They are having a laugh at you because they're like having a laugh about teachers and youth workers but on an ongoing basis it has that effect, it really does'.

Isobel's experience bears out Solórzano's explanation of the effect of microaggressions on the victims through undermining their self-esteem, and how they are perceived as a form of racism (Solórzano, 2010).

Isobel also documented overt racist attacks that she experienced:

'There was a knock at the door; I opened it, and a group of local kids spat in my face, that kind of thing. It did happen. I was so upset, and I went to the police of course and a lot of that'.

On another occasion she related how her tyres were slashed more than once: 'I did get strange things happening like my car tyres got slashed a couple of times'.

Her unpleasant experience with racism as a minority person made her potentially useful for work with minority young people like Lala and Zafirah. In regard to racist bullying in schools, Isobel argued for the importance of being alert to possible racial abuse of minority young people in that setting. As to how to tackle racist bullying, Isobel perceived it as essential to find a model with which to teach local young people understanding and appreciation of difference:

'All these young people that might bully them [minority young people] at school because they're different, that's the work that needs to be done. The work is with young people to understand that difference is a good thing.'

Isobel made explicit what she believed was crucial in promoting race equality in the rural community. She stressed the importance of spreading knowledge about a multicultural world and raising awareness of how to treat different cultures:

'It's completely important to see that this world out there, this cosmopolitan multicultural world and you'd better get going and knowing how to deal with people from different cultures.'

Because of the above-described lack of interaction with difference, Isobel believed that the prospects of any young person in the Highlands are in doubt. 'I think that aspirations of young people in general in the Highlands are problematic', she said. 'Because …' she continued, 'I think in this part of the world or in this part of Britain is still underdeveloped'.

Isobel's negative perception of the Highlands may be shaped by her routine encounters with racism and racial microaggressions as a result of being a person with distinctive, non-Scottish features and a different accent.

Nevertheless, Isobel's experience of racism and the chance to use her position of power is likely to have helped to bring an awareness of the issues which has been crucial in

supporting and helping the sisters, Lala and Zafirah, with potential race problems. It has been especially valuable in building up Lala's confidence and helping her to succeed in her aspirations. Indeed, Isobel's support appeared to work against negative and undermining attitudes from other institutional actors and institutions affecting Lala, such as her teachers or the school.

6.2.2. The Denial of Racism at a Remote Location

Isla was a career advisor. She was a White Scottish woman working at a college in the same remote town where Zach and Eva lived. Zach was the Asian seventeen-year-old male who documented persistent racist abuse at school and in the community.

Eva was a twenty-two-year old Eastern European who was challenging the process of racialisation in the tourist industry she worked in. From her experience she documented the discriminatory working conditions of Black Asian young people in the hotel where she worked. Such conditions bordered on modern slavery (*The Times*, 25. 07. 2015).

Isla described her training and background, explaining that she had always lived in the country and had been broadly trained to work with young people and support them with advice about their aspirations:

'I've lived in Scotland all my life. I'm a careers advisor, work coach, which is a new phase that we're developing in careers advice and employability. Then I went to college for the Youth Opportunity Scheme. Done youth work, community work …'

Reflecting on race relations in the community, Isla stated that she felt the rural community was tolerant of minorities: 'Certainly I think that as a community, people are very accepting and quite happy to integrate'. However, Isla felt that in communication with minority young

people there should be a mutual effort by the young local population and the arriving incomers:

‘My experience is of very pleasant. If you’re happy to talk to them [minorities –my words], they’ll talk to you. But I think it’s a bit of both sides – obviously people [local] are sceptical, and people are a bit, ”Oh, I don’t know you”.’

With such a statement, it appeared that Isla was positioning the minority young people at the same level of power as their local peers. Perhaps she did not acknowledge the difficulties arising from a possible culture shock, including lack of confidence as regards the language and the Scottish culture.

Although Isla was here justifying the community’s sceptical attitudes, she denied any potential racial discrimination or racism in the town, stating that any perceived racist incident was probably the result of media exaggeration:

‘I’ve never seen any kind of thing [racism - my words]. Any horror stories [racist attacks] are usually something or nothing that’s been well publicized, and it’s blown out of all proportion’.

Isla’s words chime with the finds of Derbyshire (1994), Dhalech (1999), de Lima (2009, 2012c), and Dawney (2008), on the ‘invisibility of racism’ in rural areas. These scholars agree on the reality of the ‘no problem here’ attitude, resulting in neglect of race equality issues by local authorities, agencies and employers, on the basis of this type of complacency.

The ‘no problem here’ outlook may be aggravating discriminatory employment conditions, or may even cause acute problems for some of the minority young people working in the remote area, and that will be explored next.

6.2.3. Discrimination in Employment for Minority Youth [Migrant Workers] in a Remote Rural Community

Emily was a White British ESOL teacher who worked at Eva's college. Emily described her experience of living and working abroad for some years and explained how she found that helpful for her current job. She felt that having formerly experienced full cultural immersion was the best training she could have had. She also believed that her teaching experience was a learning process as well:

'I went to China for four years and taught in a tertiary college about three thousand kilometres west of XXXX, teaching trainee primary school teachers and secondary school teachers. For me, it was a total immersion experience. So I think I got a lot out of teaching because I was in a learning situation as well'.

Emily's perception of the minority young people in the remote community where she currently worked seemed very different from Isla's. She stated that many of her ESOL students were experiencing unfair conditions in their occupations, with lower-paid jobs and illegal working conditions: 'A lot of my students work for less than the minimum wage, and there are illegal practices taking place'.

Indeed, Emily could describe discriminatory working practices imposed on Black and minority young people employed in the area, when compared with the locals. She explained that she felt employment was racialised and segregated for the minority population:

'There seem to be in this area sort of jobs that are for incoming migrants and jobs that are local jobs, and there's a separation of jobs. I think … that there needs to be more integration between them.'

Emily highlighted the need to bring equal job opportunities to minority young people and to give them a chance to interact with the local community. Given the long shifts of many of these jobs or the nature of some posts involving slight or non-existent interaction with the local population, such a goal was apparently hard to achieve.

Margaret, the third sector worker, further illustrated the issue raised by Emily. She explained that minority young people want to meet local friends: 'What they [minority young people – my words] really want is to find some way of having a local friend'. But she added that this was made difficult by the nature of their jobs:

'Something [making friends – my words] which seemed difficult to achieve for those working at the back of take-away or retail places. They don't interact with any British people, English-speaking people, because they're not on the counter, they're in the kitchen.'

Hence, Emily and Margaret agreed that one of the obstacles to feeling included in the rural communities was the unfair working conditions of the minority young people. These conditions included long shifts and the nature of the jobs, which restricted opportunities to interact with locals and thus to improve their English and feel part of the community. The result was an evident 'lose-lose' situation.

6.2.4. Silences about Racial Abuse in the Rural Community: Fear or Lack of Trust in Service Provision Reporting Racist Abuse?

On the basis of the above, experiences of racism seemed to be routinely silenced in the Highlands. As we saw previously, this was not an exception among rural areas in the UK (Chakraborti and Garland, 2004; de Lima, 2005b, 2005c, 2008; Dawney, 2008). It seemed that the 'no problems here' approach has resulted in a lack of service provision dealing with racism and race issues. To this can be added the difficulty of access to services for geographical reasons, or simply the fact that race incidents tend to be unreported and unpunished (Dawney, 2008: 4), or underreported as 'breach of the peace'.

Lala and Zafirah's father spoke about the difficulty of challenging low-level racist attacks, or racial microaggressions, because of the lack of training of the police and the scarce services in place to attend to issues of race and racism. For example, Lala and Zafirah's

father narrated how a neighbour's dog attacked Lala when she was twelve, and the police never reported the neighbour's attitude as potentially racist. The father explained that there was enough evidence of racism in the fact that the family never received an apology; instead the neighbours found the incident funny. According to Lala, this incident escalated into further racial abuse.

'Their dog bit Lala and they [neighbours] thought it was hilarious, I had supposedly threatened to kill their dog; the police said they couldn't do anything about it unless they charged me as well.'

The fact that Lala's father verbally threatened to kill the dog was apparently placed by the police on the same level as Lala's physical injury. She had to go to hospital and was left with a deep, lifelong scar on her ear. In addition, the family felt that they were never compensated by the neighbours or the community.

On another occasion, when Lala was openly racially abused and called 'Black bitch' at a local dance, her father related that the woman who insulted his daughter was only fined a small amount of money and the incident was recorded as a breach of the peace. The father believed that the police were reluctant to report racist incidents: 'The police there are very reluctant to report it [as a racist incident – my words]'. Indeed, he stated that if the case had been reported as a racist incident it would have incurred more serious charges. Thus, he thought that, for statistical reasons, the police preferred to report racist incidents as simple offences like breach of the peace in order to make their lives easier.

'I think it's all down to statistics and the police wanting to have things cleared up. And they know that this lower charge [breach of the peace] they can definitely get that through, but this higher charge [racist incident], it might be more trouble and it might not get through so they go for the easier option.'

He believed that the police preferred to register racist incidents as less problematic cases.

‘The police they are very reluctant to try and convict on that [racism], but they know it’s easy to get breach of the peace because everyone can do breach of the peace, and it will be a successful conviction, whereas my feeling is that if they tried to go for the racially aggravated part they feel that there would be more paperwork or there would have been less chance of being successful.’

For Lala’s father, the training of police in the Highlands needed to be improved: ‘I don’t think they’re very well trained, the police up in general in Highland, Northern Constabulary, so they want easy cases that they can easily solve.’

To provide further evidence of the silences over racism in remote areas, Zach’s father documented his son’s experience of racial bullying outside the school.

‘Just like the last week, when he catches the bus home, the girls in the bus they ... insulted my son and tried to say something very rude to him.’

Zach’s father wanted to report the racist bullying to the teachers or the police but Zach responded that he was unwilling to, thus confirming Zach’s belief that dealing with racism depended only on himself.

‘My son told me, “If they do it again tomorrow, if they are still there and do the same thing again, I will punch them”. I say, “Now you have to go to school to tell the teachers to go to report to police.” He said, “I don’t care”,’

As we saw in the previous chapter, Zach did not want to report his racist experience. His reaction is not unusual; it is, in fact, a common one resonating with previous research (see Caulfield et al., 2005; Archer and Francis, 2005). These scholars explain through their findings that secondary pupils tend to avoid reporting racist assaults for fear of making things worse. The muteness and self-censorship surrounding Zach’s experience, apparently a typical occurrence at rural schools, was a symptom of how silences contribute to

perpetuating racism in these institutions. Thus, it would be pertinent to ask: who should be responsible for addressing, tackling and reporting racism, the minority young people, their teachers, or other adults accountable for them?

From Zach's story it appeared that teachers and service providers, including the career adviser Isla, either could not see the problem or, perhaps, ignored it as if they did not care. This reflects an abdication by practitioners and schools of their responsibility to protect, support and help minority young people develop feelings of belonging, as stated in the Curriculum for Excellence and upheld by the Highlands race equality policies.

Archer and Francis (2005: 403) argued 'the importance for schools and policy-makers to take responsibility for tackling racism on numerous levels'. They were recommending for Chinese pupils what could be applied to any minority young person. These authors highlight how Chinese young people tend to incur extra pressure in their daily experiences of racial bullying due to the homogenising stereotype that they perform better in school. Considering that Zach was regarded as a good student until S6, it seems plausible that the constant racist bullying was having an impact on his attainment.

The non-reporting of racist incidents was also documented by Margaret when she related how, after a celebration, a group of minority people shared experiences of racism in the rural community. After listening, Margaret suggested that they report these experiences to the police, but they pleaded with her to keep silent.

'There was one time I went to a group of people after one of their festivals. I was a guest there and they were all talking about how the rise in racist attacks had gone up. They were all giving stories about and I said, "What can we do about this? Can we report it?" and they all said, "Please, don't report it".'

According to Dawney (2008) and Neal (2002), minority communities avoid reporting racist incidents to avoid further issues with the rural local population. Thus, racism becomes invisible by being silenced. The policy of being silent about experiences of racism is the same for young people studying or working and living in the rural community, and for the adults who have had such experiences. Such imposed silences (Ferguson, 2003) perhaps

explain the responses of secondary minority pupils, as we saw in the case of Zach. Thus, to guarantee minority young people the chance to achieve their full potential, it is crucial for schools to protect them by addressing and tackling any hidden racism, as illustrated in Zach's story.

In line with previous narratives, this study recounted the contribution of Heather, an academic knowledgeable of the area, who explained why she thought minorities were afraid of reporting racist actions: 'It's like incidents have been documented over twenty-five years that people experience racism, and the police don't do anything about it'.

Heather made clear that it would benefit the police and the community to have racism consistently reported.

'Of course it's good for them [the police] because they have the increases [in reporting racism]. But the reporting is just one aspect of it.'

However, Heather questioned the means the police and the public sector would require to make the reporting operative and effective. This was, perhaps, why she thought that visible and invisible minorities refrained from reporting racist incidents in the Highlands.

'It's what resources are being [placed]. Reporting and punishing people for it [racism] is another one. There has to be more than that. There has to be developing confidence in the people that are being at the victim end of it actually to stand up and speak about it.'

As Lala's father mentioned earlier, the lack of punishment for the racial abuse his daughter experienced left the family with feelings of unfairness and distress.

Being aware of the key support provided by training in matters of race and racism within the police, Liza, the NGO officer, has developed a program to create awareness of racism in that institution. The program was intended for police cadets and Liza lectured them about

diversity and racism, focusing on the Chinese population living in the Highlands. As she explained:

'Well, I love to be able to spread it [awareness about racism] and that is why I do talks to police cadets, about diversity, culture, before they pass out. "I'm there to talk about the Chinese community". When I say, "If a Chinese person come to you and ask for help what do you see them first". They see the problem, and that's good.'

'The problem' Liza is referring to is any racist incident or attack. Although the program was meant to protect and support the Asian community, it might, or might not, be having some impact on police awareness of racial issues affecting other minority communities in the Highlands.

Such awareness of the existence of racism, together with the need to tackle the silences around it in the rural area, was again highlighted by Liza. She said explicitly that the lack of reports of racism did not mean it was not manifesting: 'I keep telling people, just because I didn't hear it [racism] doesn't mean that there isn't any [racism]; they might not come to tell me, but there could be something happening'.

Liza's words link neatly with the CRT stance and previous rural studies in the UK of understanding that racism is the norm, is business as usual, in this case having its particular rural quality (Dhalech, 1999) whereby invisibility and silences will go deeper than in urban areas, because of colour-blindness and the scattered numbers of the minority communities in a predominantly white area like the Highlands.

Resonating with the CRT approach, Margaret explained that she felt racism was a natural attitude, probably innate in every human being: 'We have to be aware that consciously or unconsciously we are all born with a kind of racist attitude and that's all around the world'.

As Liza and Margaret documented, racism is a reality in the area. Thus, teachers need to be alert and ready to assist in matters of race and racism, and not only by speaking about

inclusion. It should happen regardless of the presence of minority young people in schools, as this thesis has already argued.

In addition, we can see the relevant role of training for the police and service providers in anti-racist matters, so as to raise awareness of the reality of black and minority ethnic young people's lives and their likely susceptibility to racism and xenophobia in the rural community.

On the basis of the above, the experiences of overt racism narrated by Lala and Zach may need to be linked with those of other young minority people, as recounted by Emily, Margaret and Liza. This will, hopefully, yield a wider picture of the circumstances minority young people are undergoing in the Highlands.

Overall, it seems that there is an extensive culture of silences about racism and matters of race in the area. These silences, apparently, extending beyond schools and pervading all the rural structures. Perhaps silences surrounding racism are preventing the minority young people from developing the resources needed to articulate relationships in which they can feel treated as equals at the rural school and in the community.

Therefore, resources with which to address and tackle racism and xenophobia in the Highlands are demanded of the public and third sector – i.e. schools, the Council and any association working with young people – in order to find coordinated solutions. Thus, to look further into potential answers, it is necessary to explore what the adult participants think about current policies in place in the Highlands.

6.3. The Disparity between Rhetoric and Practices in the Area: Hiding Racism in the Highlands?

As we saw in Chapter Two, the Highland Council has launched several documents addressing matters of race equality. The most recent one reassures us about the aim of promoting a fairer and more 'inclusive Highland where everyone can feel a part of the Highland community' (Highland Council, 2013: 10). An additional aim is to foster understanding, so that 'people are free to live their lives without harassment and discrimination, and can take part in community life' (ibid.).

Heather, a scholar working in the area, emphasized the disparity she found between the policies in place and the lack of public sector resources to support them. She claimed: 'The public sector likes to have a policy, but they don't like to put the resources into it'. She stated that the Council's standard practice was to avoid funding race equality matters on grounds of the small numbers of minority young people in the region. She complained that the usual answer from service provision was: 'The numbers are too small, and we can't provide the resources'.

One of the key ideas defended by de Lima in 2001b, through the importance of understanding how the experiences of the rural minority population differ from those of urban minorities. Her argument is that policy patterns from urban areas cannot be applied to visible and invisible minority groups in rural societies. Thus she maintained that, to meet the requirements of the minority population, it was essential to understand their actual needs, as against the Council's justifications for neglecting them on the basis of their low numbers.

As we saw in the previous chapter, in considering the experiences of these minority young people we need to take account of the fact that, for geographical reasons, they tend to be isolated, and thus lack access to community networks and service provision. This circumstance has proved to have an impact on their feelings of lack of belonging and alienation from the local community and in their schools.

Given the potential weakness of race equality policies operating in schools and rural communities in the Highlands, it is pertinent to explore what stakeholders think about them.

For example, Margaret believed that the educational system needed to be enhanced. 'I personally think the education needs to improve. The school system'.

Underpinning Margaret words, Heather criticised the inconsistency of current educational policies in place, in cases where they relied principally on 'ad hoc' methods of practitioners, as we saw in the statements of Isobel and Fiona. As Heather explained:

'There's no point in having policies if you don't actually work them out. It's not good enough to say, 'Well I'll rely on the goodwill of this teacher, that teacher' whatever, but rather than sort of saying 'Well, how do you make schools accountable for it[racism – my words].'

And Margaret, agreeing with Heather, further explains the changes she believes are necessary:

'I feel strongly it's about the education policy makers that need to learn a few things and recognise that although, you know, the education service is good there are ways that they need to adapt and change.'

Margaret argued that, to achieve this, the guidance system needed to be revisited as it lacked accessibility, a feature that required some attention: 'So guidance teachers probably, you know the whole guidance system needs to be more approachable.'

Heather understood that schools needed to implement relevant and useful policies across the Highlands, enabling the discussion about race equality and matters of race and racism to take place. That was seen as necessary not only for schools but also for the communities,

thus guaranteeing the development of feelings of genuine belonging for the minority young people living in the area.

Once more, Heather argued that the scarcity of minority youth has been the excuse used by institutions for not developing adequately robust race equality policies. Even if there were no visible minorities, race equality policies need to be in place in the community, as Heather explained:

'And I think part of the problem as well is that they get hung up on the fact that minority young people numbers are small here and there. But the argument that I have always made is that it does not even matter if there's not one person from a black community, you need to work on race equality.'

Given the above scenario of lack of consistency and support provided by race equality policies in schools and in the rural community, it is arguable here that the question is how to challenge not only overt forms of racism but, in addition, the type of subtle and covert racism found in the Highlands: 'microracial aggressions' (Solórzano, 1993), and what Essed (2001) summarised as 'everyday racism', as discussed in Chapter Four. Indeed, how can rural young people confront this without substantial support from policies and service provision?

As Heather explained:

'There would be low-level racist comments being made all the time, and the young person would challenge it. But eventually it becomes very difficult for that person to keep challenging it without that support [effective policies – my words].'

In addition, Heather suggested that policies to tackle racism perhaps did not need to be homogenised in the Highlands, since geography might operate as an important barrier, making it difficult to reach remote areas. Heather believed that policies should be adapted to the specificities of each area, adding: 'They might have policies, but they [the Council]

don't actually look at the policies and say "Well, how does that work for this part of the Highlands or that part of the Highlands?"'

Heather's understanding that policies on race equality need to adapt to the particularities of the geographical location agrees with de Lima (2006a), Neal, (2002) and Dwyer and Bressey (2008). These scholars argue for 'the significance of the microgeographies of everyday life in understanding how ethnicity is lived and how ideas of race are made, mobilised and encountered' (Dwyer and Bressey, 2008: 3) in specific rural areas, as we saw in Chapter Three.

Expanding on the disparity between policies and practices, Margaret documented discriminatory job recruitment for certain visible minority young people. She explained how some of her young minority friends experienced persistent rejection over years of applying for jobs. Margaret felt that some employers were biased and prejudiced towards some minorities. She even speculated that this behaviour could be viewed as evidence of racism, given the psychological impact the constant experience of exclusion was having on the young person.

'I've got friends who have been waiting for a job for years and they just never get through to the next level of interviews. They just never do and there's only so much you can take. You just get fed up … and you can't believe it's not racism if you've had it time and time again.'

For Margaret, race equality policies on employment seem to diverge from reality: 'So on a policy level they [minority young people, my words] probably feel everything is fine.' However, the access to jobs for some minority groups proves the contrary, when she even refers to subtle attitudes shown by institutional actors responsible for providing jobs:

'It comes down to the people who are in post and it comes down to the impressions they give through body language, through how long you'll have to wait for something…'

Drawing on the above, for Margaret, institutional racism was reflected in subtle actions and was responsible for the majority of unfair circumstances affecting Black and minority young people in the Highlands. She observed that bigoted attitudes were evident in every agency and were making life difficult for the young people. Thus, she highlighted the need for the Council to work at addressing discriminatory practices and to develop further resources for tackling racism:

'I think a lot of the institutional racism happens very subtly and it's very effective; it works; it really does put people in a very bad situation and it happens and I think the Highland Council, be it the police, the education, the Health Board, all need to continue working at dealing with these issues.'

The above is in contrast to the latest Race Equality (2013) document mentioned, according to which in the Highlands everyone is entitled to a job and to equal opportunities.

Another theme emerging from the disparity between policies and practices is the question of where the money allocated to enhance race equality in the Highlands should go, as Margaret and Heather elucidated. For Margaret the issue needed serious consideration and was seen as a real challenge for race equality in the future: 'It's made me think carefully about what, how we could just put in our pennies worth in the future. So that's quite a good challenge for us to cover'.

For Heather, despite finding a positive sign in the current proliferation of diverse minority associations in the Highlands, it was also necessary to have in place a service provision with expertise in dealing with racial bullying: 'Ultimately it's fine to have this Indian Association, this Chinese Association but there's nobody dealing with hardcore bullying racism really.'

Looking critically at current minority associations, Heather questioned whether the region could afford so many associations in the Highlands: 'Can we afford to have somebody working with every ethnic group?'

In fact, Heather believed the Grampian Racial Equality Council would need to provide an office to negotiate the type of racism that was most in need of addressing, namely, hardcore racism: thus, to provide appropriate training which primarily would speak for the victims. Heather explained:

'I've argued that GREC [Grampian Racial Equality Council] was in power. It should have had an outpost of an office here to deal with precisely that kind of racism and to provide support and to do the training but particularly to advocate on behalf of the victims.'

Resonating with Heather's statement, Margaret explained what she thought was missing: 'I think more provision of training and maybe more opportunities to mix with the local young people'.

Thus, on the basis of the above, it seems key to acknowledge three factors. First, the need for an agency dealing with hardcore racial bullying in the area. This will, it is hoped, enhance the level of confidence of the minority community, and of young people in particular, in reporting racist attacks. Second, the need for further training of service providers, be they teachers, the guidance system, youth workers, police, or any practitioner working with minority communities, on issues of race and racism in the Highlands, to show, through this measure, how black and minority young people could improve their experiences in schools and the rural community in the Highlands. Finally, the need to encourage and spread multicultural experiences and foster interaction with difference through the schools. This significant role can be fulfilled, for example, through exchanges of pupils and teachers with other countries where there is sufficient contrast with the Scottish culture. This need for diversity was elucidated by Lala, Zafirah, and Maria when they expressed a wish for greater multiculturalism in their school and in the Highlands.

Consequently, education seems to be seen as the key to tackling racist attitudes, as we will see next.

6.3.1. Education is Seen as Key to Tackling Racism in Rural Areas

Margaret explained that she regarded schools and, principally, education, as crucial for addressing racism and xenophobia and tackling stereotypes and bias among the rural young people. She argued the need to speak to educational authorities to promote awareness of racism and race productions to find ways to fight it in schools and the community. As she stated:

'I feel schools are the crucial thing … the key is education. I feel very strongly that the education system as a whole needs to take some things on board and I think it would be great to speak to, if we could get our act together, speak to someone quite high up in education and say are you aware of these issues? How do you tackle these issues? Higher ones.'

Margaret understood that schools had a key role to play in following the relevant procedures for addressing and reducing racism in the community. To pursue this aim, she saw how important it would be for the entire educational system to opt for joint action against racism in the area. Margaret felt that educational policy makers should improve the ways they approached race equality and introduced changes, listening to the needs of the minority young people and avoiding homogenisation. She stated:

'I personally feel strongly it's about the education policy makers that need to learn a few things and recognise that although, you know, the education service is good there are ways that they need to adapt and change.'

It could be that race and racism issues would need to be approached in a different way from service provision in schools and in the rural community; as Margaret explained: 'You know, there are several race issues that need to be tackled and it may well be that we need to do it in a completely different format'.

Although current educational policies in the Highlands: Working together for the Highlands (The Highland Council, 2012-2017: 11), state that everyone is treated the same

and that apparently every minority young person has access to any provision, the reality reveals the opposite. As Margaret said: 'I mean the policy is that they're colour-blind, and everything is accessible for everyone. But the reality is it's not'.

The inequalities and poor practices in education and the communities were reflected through the stories of the young participants here, and were particularly acute in the cases of Lala, Zafirah, Zach and Sara, as visible young people.

To finish, coming back to her initial words, Margaret insisted that the Council needed to be more active and to become further involved in effective practices aimed at fostering acceptance and feelings of belonging for both the black and minority ethnic young people already living in the Highlands and for those newly arriving.

'But I think far and above everything the council have got to say publicly "We are so pleased there are young people coming into the Highlands; we welcome you". They need to say it.'

Conclusions

Three common themes have emerged from the interviews with stakeholders. First, the disparity of expectations between what the young people want from schools and what practitioners believe schools are for. It seems that for the young people, schools were expected to be places where they felt safe and belonged; whereas for practitioners, referred to here as institutional actors, schools were rather a place where models of assimilation were prioritised, with the learning of English coming first.

Unsurprisingly, for the minority ethnic young people of this study, their sense of self and life aspirations have been problematised and marginalised through their sustained

interactions with a range of institutional actors, in both the public and third sectors in the Highlands.

Second, there is the persistence of the silences surrounding racism and xenophobia which are common to any rural community, and probably result from illiteracy on the part of service provision in matters of race and racism, as reflected in the failure to report racist incidents in schools and in the rural communities. Here I argue that institutional actors – from teachers to youth workers to career counsellors to police – lack meaningful understanding and literacy in race equality matters.

With the exception of a minority youth worker knowledgeable in race equality matters, deficient training in matters of race, everyday racism and institutionalised racism has generated silences, or perhaps a vacuum, hindering the recognition of minority ethnic young people as capable and active agents. Such lack of literacy in race equality on the part of agents working with young people also results from a dearth of positive and constructive interaction with difference and is probably accountable for perpetuating racism and discriminatory practices in the rural community.

Finally, we see how the disparity between the rhetoric of race equality policies in place, and the reality disclosed by stakeholders in this study, seems to show that there are enough policies but perhaps not enough resources, practitioners, goodwill and/or energy to implement them, leading to deficient practices by institutional actors and so perpetuating silences over racism, xenophobia and exclusionary practices in the rural community of the Highlands.

Hence it is important to take educational authorities on board in updating race equality policies in rural areas, and to redouble the efforts to find and implement solutions for tackling racism more effectively. These resources may range from spaces in which to discuss potential racism and acts of discrimination, to improved ways of making the Black and minority ethnic young people feel included. For the time being, it is essential to

recognise racism and xenophobia as realities remaining silenced and invisible in the Highlands.

7

Chapter 7: Concluding Thoughts

'*I think it is tough the chance of being multilingual here [in the Highlands]. I'd like schools to have more people from different cultures and loads of opportunities to travel.*'

(Maria, sixteen, mixed, accessible)

Introduction

This study has explored the life experiences and aspirations of eight black and minority young people, compiled through interviews across two rural areas in Scotland. The stories of the young people were completed, and contrasted, with the interviews with eleven adults surrounding them: four parents and seven stakeholders. The common thread in their stories is a life experience with a certain relation to difference in a rural landscape, this being grounded on a more or less distinctive race and/or, ethnicity, and a wish to achieve diverse ambitions.

My purpose was to interpret the meaning that black and minority young people assigned to the experience of their difference from the rural social world around them, and to determine whether this life experience shaped their aspirations. To this end, this study not only

explored their narrated experiences and aspirations but also looked into the related silences (Ferguson, 2003): why they were happening; what was missing from their stories. Who was accountable for the silences? The young person, the practitioners, or both? This thesis has, thus, discussed the intersection of their difference, race and/or ethnicity, with youth and with rurality, or the impact of geography on their life experiences and aspirations.

I introduced this thesis by recounting personal experiences which explained why I wanted to do this study and which set the context of my research. In the following two chapters, I discussed the three socially constructed barriers shaping this thesis: race, youth and rurality. Through the contemporary body of literature about race, racism and racialisation, I discussed how these terms are socially, historically, politically and economically constructed. I also discussed the role of whiteness and silences in the race discourse. To disrupt racial privileges and break the silences, education is seen as the key to bringing awareness of and tackling racism and explored in the Scottish context. From there, I paused on relevant race policies in the UK, closing with a discussion of current policies in the Highlands. Finally, I completed the literature review, pausing on the critical discourses related to issues of rurality and youth. Both equally relevant in the discussion here.

In the Methodology chapter, I outlined the epistemology of this thesis: why I adopted CRT and complemented it with Solórzano's theory of racial microaggressions, as the theoretical frameworks of this thesis; and how I applied CRT through the use of intersectionality and the essential tool for this study, namely counter-storytelling. Then I explained why I needed to produce this thesis as a qualitative study to achieve the aim of placing it in the arena of social justice through its political outlook. I followed with an account of how I conducted this study and how critical ethnography provided sufficient lenses to allow me to become a 'Jack-of-all-trades' at fieldwork, a tool necessary for completing this study.

In the subsequent chapters, I analysed and discussed the stories of the young people through counter-storytelling, completed with their parents when possible, and with stakeholders working with or around the young people, and contrasted these with the scarce body of literature available.

This chapter outlines the concluding thoughts of this thesis.

7.1. Theoretical Contribution: Exploring the Silences

CRT has made palatable racism and race productions, be stereotypes, prejudices, and xenophobia in this thesis. It has not only disrupted the silences and problematised them, enabling the discussion to take place, overtly and naturally, about racism, racial discrimination (Pérez Huber and Solórzano, 2015) and xenophobia (Adam, 2015), but also inspired reflection on the nature of the silences (Ferguson, 2003; Trepagnier, 2006; Ryan-Flood and Gill, 2010).

Silences manifest as a form of oppression and exclusion. As Róisín Ryan-Flood and Rosalind Gill, (2010: xvi) have expressed it: 'Silence can be a tool of oppression; when you are silenced, whether by explicit force or by persuasion, it is not simply that you do not speak but that you are barred from a conversation which nevertheless involves you'.

But they also manifest as a form of resistance and a strategic response to oppression; when talking may end up in disempowerment and negative consequences for the oppressed, then it seems sensible to keep silent. Indeed, talking is about trust, thus, 'a lack of trust can be the reason not to speak' (ibid.) so as to resist. Both forms are present in this study, as we have seen.

My theoretical understanding is that race, racism and racialisation have been shaped by the colonial period in their construction. Thus, racism and xenophobia, including prejudices and stereotypes about race and/or ethnicity, are natural features of our societies. From CRT scholars as, for example, Ladson-Billings (1995), Delgado (2006), Gillborn (2006, 2008), Solórzano (1998, 2012) Leonardo (2009, 2012), I have learned how racism operates, grounded on white privilege, on black and visible minorities. However, Solórzano's racial

microaggressions theory provided the tool for analysing subtle expressions of racism and exclusion, thus going beyond skin colour here, and illuminating this study sufficiently in regard to the impact of feelings of marginalisation over 'difference' experienced on a daily basis for any minority young person.

Through intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1991) I have presented the convergence of race, rurality and age, in the hope of providing this thesis with the necessary political understanding.

Thus, it was necessary to understand, by considering rural issues, the intersection of geography with race, and how the imaginary whiteness of the countryside, as a social constrainer, further shaped the rural experiences of the young participants. Thus, I explored how 'the Other' is perceived as problematic in rural microgeographies in general, and in the Scottish Highlands in particular. Then, I considered, with reference to the 'denial of difference' in rural landscapes (Agyeman, 2006; Dawney, 2008; Neal and Fox et al., 2012), how the young people have positioned themselves around the silences over their racialised experiences, sometimes with resilience, sometimes with resistance and sometimes with both, as we saw.

Finally, I have presented the convergence of race, rurality and age, incorporating age as another social construction. By explaining how young people tend to be unheard, homogenised, misrecognised, disempowered and problematised (for example, Wyn, 1997; Furlong and Cartmel, 2006; Heath et al., 2009; Furlong, 2012), this study incorporated the social barriers youth confronts. From youth scholars, I have also learned how young people need to be counted as active agents who deploy a range of resources to deal with their experiences of racism, isolation and exclusion in their rural schools and communities (Panelli, 2004; Panelli et al., 2007; Schäfer, 2007; Myers and Bhopal, 2015).

Thus, when age intersects with race and geography, minority youth experiences tend to involve additional penalties. First, when rural processes of racialisation are built upon the idea of whiteness as the norm. Second, when racialisation is constructed following the 'denial of difference' as a result of ignorance about 'the Other', or lack of literacy in racism and race productions, as identified here. Finally, when all the previous factors are

additionally shaped by matters of youth and rurality, thus further constraining the life experiences of minority young people. Consequently, experiences of racism, xenophobia, racial discrimination, and isolation are especially acute and painful, particularly for black or visible and other minority young people, in rural landscapes where the idea of whiteness is key to understanding how racialisation takes place.

My anthropological background has caused me to comprehend that we all have an ethnicity and a race, which includes white ethnicity. However, whiteness tends to be seen as raceless (Gillborn and Ladson-Billings, 2004; Leonardo, 2009). Understanding white as another skin colour which needs to be problematised further (for example, Garner, 2006; Housee, 2008; Rhodes, 2013) has been a significant advance made by this study. From Garner, I understood that whiteness is subject to a hierarchy, and thus, that the idea of white needs also to relate to that of white privilege: how, going up and down the ladder between whiteness and blackness will depend on the proximity to or distance from white privilege; a concept associated with post-colonial hegemony and the distribution of power in Western countries (for example, Delgado and Stefancic, 2001; Leonardo, 2009). As Garner (2006: 179) explains: the distinction between white and non-white is marked by 'power relations and the outcomes of them'. Thus, through whiteness studies and the idea of white hierarchy, I have also found how the gradations of visibility or invisibility of difference enable, or do not enable, the positioning and negotiation of the young person's experience around white privilege.

To challenge the deficit in accounts from the academy or endorsed institutions about these young people, given that they are the excluded, I was helped immensely by counter-storytelling, a tool provided by CRT (Solórzano, 2002; Delgado and Stefancic, 2006). This allowed me to discuss what was missing and what was discernible in their realities as black and minority young people: the account of exclusion over race and/or ethnicity. It allowed the discussion of their encounters with racism and discrimination to exist. Counter-storytelling questions and problematises whiteness and white privilege and helps to deconstruct its normality in the rural world of the young people. It also facilitates the exposition of issues of geography and age when necessary.

Thus, CRT and Solórzano's theory of racial microaggressions, when perceived as helpful lenses within anti-racist education, have opened up the discussion, empowering those involved and providing the confidence to address race and racism. Given the limited, almost absent, literature of race and racism and rural youth studies (Panelli et al., 2007), including studies of Scotland 'per se' where processes of racialisation of the minority community tend to be ignored (Arshad, 2003; Dwyer and Bressey, 2012: 118), this theoretical framework seemed necessary to incorporate racism and race productions into rural youth studies through the reported experiences of black and minority young people in rural Scotland.

Consequently, the originality of this thesis lies in its introduction of race and racism issues through CRT into rural youth studies, thus making a key contribution across diverse disciplines such as youth, race, rural and intersectional studies in Scotland.

7.2. Research Question and Implications for Practice

Discussing and confronting social injustice has been a significant autobiographical experience, as explained in Chapter One. As Madison (2010: 21) argues, the unique experiences in our lives, past and present, and who we are, will prevail in the elaboration of specific questions about the social constructions of our time, certain issues in our world and 'why things are the way they are'. Thus, the primary question in my research reflects some of the disquietude I felt as a rural secondary teacher of minority young people in the past, and following my research in the Highlands in 2010:

What are the life experiences and aspirations of black and minority ethnic young people in the Scottish Highlands?

The question has given my participants the opportunity to discuss whatever issues they found important within their life experiences and aspirations. It gave the young people the chance to raise matters of race and racism which they had had no chance to talk about

before, in the face of initial silences imposed by gatekeepers. Additionally, it encouraged them to discuss any matters relevant to them.

Besides the first principal question, there were three additional ones derived from it:

How does secondary education shape the life aspirations of black and minority ethnic young people in the Scottish Highlands?

In the discussion with the young people, three issues were demonstrated: issues of geographical isolation, issues related to negative experiences at school, and issues of lack of agency credited to the young people.

The first issue, geographical isolation, was especially intense for those who were born abroad. To the isolation resulting from living in a rural area, was added the perception of being 'othered' by their peers at schools and neighbours on the basis of their race, ethnicity and/or national origin. Unsurprisingly, their narratives tell of experiences of overt racism, and of feelings of discrimination and not belonging.

This theme was contrasted with the perceptions of various parents and stakeholders, some of whom constituted institutional actors. As a result, this thesis revealed the disparity of expectations between what the young people wanted from schools and what practitioners believed schools were for. We saw that for the young people, schools were expected to be places where they felt safe and that they belonged; whereas for most practitioners, referred to here as institutional actors, schools were rather a place where the learning of English came first, and models of assimilation formed a common determinant of practice. Thus, prioritising the learning of English without recognising the young person's emotional and cultural needs (Fraser, 2000) emerged as an additional theme here.

These poor practices around race and ethnicity explained why schools have been perceived as a site of exclusion, even of racial abuse, instead of a place of inclusion and safety. On

the contrary, schools seemed to be functioning to consolidate the young people's experience of exclusion, thus echoing the limited knowledge of race, racism and difference on the part of teachers and other educational professionals in these rural schools in the Highlands.

Their stories have revealed how race, geography and age intersect on the young people, shaping their life experiences and aspirations.

Additionally, how do service providers support and assist the young people through their rural life experiences and in achieving their life aspirations?

The different forms of articulation and negotiation of the racism, exclusion and isolation the young people experienced signalled the importance of being seen as active agents, and how the young people displayed, through resilience and/or resistance, diverse resources with which to surmount their difficulties and sometimes to defy their isolation and exclusion in their rural communities.

With the exception of a minority practitioner knowledgeable in race equality matters, and the critical view provided by an ESOL teacher about unfair conditions for migrant workers, the service provision, or institutional agents, interviewed showed a lack of literacy in anti-racist education. That stemmed from deficient knowledge in matters of race, everyday racism and institutionalised racism, which, as a consequence, generated silences, allowed racial abuse and hindered the recognition of black minority ethnic young people and their cultures. Thus, this thesis has also found that the lack of literacy in anti-racism and race equality on the part of practitioners working with young people resulted from an absence of constructive and positive interaction with difference, or 'other cultures', and is probably responsible for perpetuating discriminatory practices and racism in the rural community.

The last question in this research contrasted current policies on race matters and how they did or not impact on the black and minority young people. This question is:

What are the policies on race equality in the Scottish Highlands, and how do they relate to these young people's experiences?

Through the latest document 'Equality Plan: a Fairer Highland 2012-2017' (2013: 3) it is stated: 'people are free to live their lives without harassment and discrimination and can take part in community life', adding, 'there is an organisational culture where everyone is treated with dignity and respect'. It is understood that 'people' refers also to minority young people. The statement above is an example of how, once policies are in place, then it is assumed that 'all boxes are ticked' in the matters of race equality and anti-racism in the Highlands.

Unfortunately, this thesis challenges the above document and proves the contrary. My thesis has charted, through the young people's stories and the stakeholders' accounts, the existence of such adequate policies in place, but has also revealed a need for investment in resources, good practices, and practitioners willing to implement these policies effectively. Indeed, the current situation of deficient practices by institutional actors is generating exclusionary behaviour and thus perpetuating racism and racial discrimination in the rural community of the Highlands.

7.2.1. Implications in the Highlands Context: Recommendations

The lack of grammar about race and racism found in this study opens the discussion of how to enhance the future experiences of young people from black and minority backgrounds. With the aim of overcoming current stereotypes and bias against difference at schools and in the rural community in the Highlands, this thesis recommends:

Enhancing teachers' confidence in addressing and tackling different forms of racism. Thus, the need for teachers to have training on anti-racist education and pedagogical approaches, to help develop sufficient resources for open discussion of matters of race and racism in their classrooms and at any educational institution.

Recruiting black and minority practitioners, teachers, and youth workers, to encourage the tackling of bias and stereotypes and to enrich the school experience for white Scottish young people in the Highlands.

Promoting effective bilingualism in schools through the in-depth learning of languages of countries outside the UK.

Finally, developing programs involving schools and educational institutions to promote international exchanges, in equal terms, with countries whose cultures contrast with that of Scotland, preferably countries in South Europe. The intention is to approach rural Scotland to diversity.

7.2.2. Implications for Future Research and Limitations

Like any research work, this study is limited in its scope. Consequently, further research is necessary.

The use of in-depth interviews has provided enough profound insights into the life experiences and aspirations of the young people, but at the same time, the fact of there being only eight participants gives rise to reflection on two issues in this research:

- Matters of race and racism have triggered the silences from gatekeepers and thus obstructed the recruitment of potential participants.

- The nature of those silences, when intersecting with rurality, reveals the denial of difference and the 'no problems here' stance (Gaine, 1988, 1995; Donald, 1995) in relation to minority rural communities, as illustrated in this study. That view was questioned here when contrasted with the silences of local authorities and institutional actors. If there had been no problems of race and racism, then there was no need to keep silent about them.

For future research it would be interesting to extend this study to a more diverse range of minorities in the Highlands, such as members of the Muslim or Polish communities, these being two of the broadest groups in the Highlands. In addition, future research could explore further geographical areas in the Highlands and extend to the Islands. According to de Lima (2005b, 2008), visible minorities in the Islands tend to encounter more constrainers, in the way they assimilate, and that these impede acceptance.

7.3. Final Words

The latest report from the OECD suggests that Scotland is an inclusive country. The document 'Improving Schools in Scotland: An OECD Perspective' (2015: 9) states: 'Scottish schools are inclusive. Scottish schools do very well on measures of social inclusion and mix, along with Finland, Norway and Sweden'. Furthermore, the report highlights that rural schools perform even better than urban schools. As it explains:

'Scottish students attending rural schools scored significantly higher in mathematics … rural schools in Scotland are providing at least the same educational opportunities if not better compared with urban schools.' (ibid.: 62)

The above probably fuels further the self-complacency so characteristic of Scottish agencies, where matters of racism and race equality are rarely discussed, as we saw in Chapter Two. Indeed 'equality' is a significant word in Scottish policies and is reflected in educational documents, as for example in the same report: 'Equity and equality are key aspects of Scottish education policy' (ibid.: 31).

Given the experiences of the young participants in this study, thus, the above claims are challenged by their accounts of overt racial abuse, of exclusion, of rejection over difference, and of isolation from their peers at school. The young people's stories reveal how they felt

neglected, abandoned to deal with racism on their own, and marginalised through the difficulties they experienced at school and in the rural community; how their culture was negated, even eliminated, so that they could fit in better. Thus, school becomes part of the young person's problem instead of being part of the solution, a place for developing feelings of exclusion rather than of belonging.

As we have seen through this thesis, anti-racism in the twenty-first century needs to reflect about decolonisation and, consequently, dismantling white privilege, mainly resulting from colonial times. Thus, anti-racist educators should aim to encourage ideas to deconstruct racial privileges, as, for example, the model suggested by Nash (2003) and Nayak (2008) to track ethnicity in Chapter Three.

Through our position of power, as teachers, we can create awareness of racism, matters of race and/or ethnicity, and xenophobia in our classroom, the school and the rural community. From there, we need to reflect on rural issues and youth agency. How they intersect with race? Accordingly, what specific support and encouragement need to be attended to diminish the impact on feelings of isolation on every black and minority young person's rural life experiences?

As Arshad mentioned (2002), Scotland has an excellent opportunity to face race inequalities differently. This can be extended to rural schools. It is true that the nature of Scottish nationalism and the challenge of dealing with difference, seem to present a conundrum difficult to solve. How to convincingly combine a Scottish national identity with simultaneous acceptance of 'the stranger', 'the foreigner' in our schools, as one of us, seems at least problematic. Nevertheless, to solve this problem, we need to go beyond inclusive education, which is an excellent but insufficient step forward, and ensure that we involve our teachers in an anti-racist approach consistently across our educational system regardless of the presence, or absence, of minorities in their classrooms. Our relation with race and ethnicity needs rethinking, enabling us to make a contribution by advocating for the black and minority young people who come to our rural schools, and to assure them, not only of safety and protection, but also of recognition and valuation of their cultures, so that they have the chance to achieve their aspirations.

Pérez Huber and Solórzano (2015: 315) have reminded us, 'transformation and justice is possible if we continue the work to name, resist and challenge everyday racism'. Thus we, as teachers, have the opportunity to change what needs to be modified in our classrooms. We can do much better. If we want to engage with a progressive education system, we need to run some risks and be brave. Race needs to be discussed in our schools instead of silenced, because voicing race will bring the opportunity to transcend the concept of race. As Leonardo (2012:25) explains, 'only by going through it and not over it' can we, perhaps, become free from racial strife. Nevertheless, hope and the wish for a fairer world should always be there.

To exemplify the above, I want to finish with Lala's suggestions for improvement and how she would like to make things different in the schools in the Highlands. She has been a source of inspiration, and an epitome of courage, resilience and resistance for this study:

'[I would like] a lot more education about the other world, and other cultures, and so like, you know, actually getting like people to try maybe different foods that people never tried before. Different workshops or acting classes where you get to pretend to be other, you know, [where] people are being put in other people's situation. So definitely, something that focus on being a different person and away from their Scottish culture. Just [I will] put them [pupils] in different characters, and I would ask them 'How do you feel if that was the person in the workshop?'

(Lala, twenty, black, remote)

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Terms Used in This Study

Choosing the terminology related to race is a challenging task, undergoing constant updating and entailing the risk of offending either black or white people when using certain words common at other times and in different geographical areas.

Anti-racist Education (see for example Gillborn, 1995; Carr and Klassen, 1997; Kallin, 2002; Motha, 2014) is a pedagogy identifying racism and race productions, and aiming to eliminate racism and racial discrimination. It promotes this aim when actively engaged in challenging systems, institutions, policies and practices that reveal an inequitable sharing of power in relation to race in education.

The word **Black** has been chosen to refer to the four visible people participating in this work. It is a political term alluding to a historical racial lack of power. Here, although controversial, it extends to the only Asian participant, in order to highlight visible difference. 'Black' commonly refers to people of African or Caribbean origin and recently has been challenged by African communities as detrimental to their inclusion in Scotland.[11]

Ethnicity relates to a group of people with an affinity based on a shared cultural heritage including shared traditions, languages and dialects, religion, national identity, and/or any culturally shared signifier. In addition, it is currently the preferred term in government statistics and political discourse, displacing the politically incorrect term 'race' used to refer to phenotypical human differences (Miles and Brown, 2003: 93; Clark, 2006). Thus, race and ethnicity often tend to converge in contemporary discussions (see for example de Lima, 2008b).

[11] http://www.universities-scotland.ac.uk/raceequalitytoolkit/terminology.htm

Migrant worker refers here mainly to young people born abroad and arriving in the Highlands, drawn by expectations of better working conditions than those back in their countries. They initially plan to stay for a limited time. If/when they decide to stay, then they become 'minority ethnic' (see Anderson, 2015).

Minority ethnic is the preferred word with which to refer to the invisible young participants, and in this thesis it will also allude to all young people with a sense of difference (Young, 1990). Minority ethnic is also a political term stressing that every human group has an ethnicity, a culture, a shared language, and a religion, but that the groups have different degrees of access to power, if any. The term minority ethnic also acknowledges white ethnicity as another ethnicity, but one that negotiates different power relations according to its status in society. Thus, individuals in the mainstream society, the majority ethnics, tend to exercise power over the minority groups, i.e. the minority ethnics.

The term **race**, despite its discredited biological background, I opted to use 'barely', that is, without inverted commas. The reasons are explained further in the discussion in Chapter Two. I will mention here that, after I connected with Critical Race Theory, it became clear not only that the concept was still operating, but also that if I wanted to make possible the open discussion of racism (see for example Solórzano and Yosso, 2002; Delgado and Stefancic, 2006; Gillborn, 2008) and race productions in this work, I needed to adopt a radical and clear position allowing it. The use of 'bare race' aligns with this progressive view.

Race productions will refer to all matters related to race: racial discrimination, stereotypes, bias and prejudices. It also applies to race issues or questions surrounding race.

The term **xenophobia**, or 'fear of foreigners' (Hejrm, 1998; De Master and Le Roy, 2000: 421) refers to the practices of rejection and hatred towards any person or group viewed as the 'Other' (Miles, 1989; Young, 1990) by the mainstream society. Thus, it transcends colour, being applied to the act of denial and exclusion of any 'outsider' coming to live in the dominant culture. Xenophobia is particularly relevant in Europe where nationalist movements may see 'outsiders' or 'the Others' as a threat to the values of national identity (ibid.). The concept can run parallel to the concept of cultural racism, although xenophobia

is more generic and involves rejection of anyone who is different in nationality, language or colour.

White[12] is the term related to the population having a white skin colour, commonly a synonym for Western culture or cultures coming from the North (Leonardo, 2012). It is problematised through Critical Race Theory (CRT) and within Whiteness studies, which question the privilege of some white people, known as White Privilege. This perspective identifies the misdistribution of power and brings awareness of a hierarchy derived from White Privilege (Garner, 2006; Leonardo, 2009). Thus, within white groups, there are different categories or statuses of whiteness according to their degree of access to institutional power.

[12] ibid.

Appendix 2: Map of the Scottish Highlands

Appendix 3: Leaflet for participants

Volunteers are needed for a doctoral study at the University of Edinburgh.

Are you between 15 and 25 years old?

Are you from a different cultural background: do you speak a different language from English, are from a different ethnicity, come from another country?

Have you moved to Scotland in the last year or were you born here and have a parent or both from other culture?

Do you live in Fort William or surroundings?

If you answered yes to all of these questions, I'd really like to interview you for about an hour. We will discuss your life and career aspirations.

A small token/payment will be given to those who take part in this study.

If you are interested please contact:

Patricia Cacho

Doctoral Student

Moray House School of Education

University of Edinburgh

Mobile:07544787291

P.Cacho@sms.ac.ed.uk

Appendix 4: Notes from fieldwork and photos

Stage 1. Initial contacts. October to mid November 2012

Initial Contacts with the Highland Council where The Equal Opportunity Office, as the person responsible for minority groups, facilitates a list of contacts with the minority communities. She ignores a request for an interview.

I exchange emails with the two officers responsible for young people in the North and South of the Highlands through High Life Highland.

From an initial positive response offering the possibility of some young participants from one of them, finally there is no cooperation and the gates remain closed. This, despite several attempts, through emails and phone calls, and a final meeting where it was made clear they would not help because, as a minority ESOL teacher explained through an email including a sceptical emoticon:

"This is a small community and not willing to talk".

SHIMCA (Scottish Highland and Islands and Moray Chinese Association) 8th AGM:

I met the chair of SHIMCA at the Multicultural Centre in Inverness. SHIMCA has been sharing space with the Multicultural Association for some years but recently, due to space; they have separated into two independent buildings.

She invites me to the 8th AGM on Monday 22nd October at the Waterside Hotel at 1.30pm. There it was offered an opportunity to meet potential young participants for this study.

During the AGM:

The majority of attendees were Asian Chinese although I could see minorities from other Asian countries such as Bangladesh and Philippines. Additionally, there were some local people wearing their kilts and a group of police officers.

During the performance:

The meeting takes place in the big lounge of a hotel with a stage at the front and about two hundred chairs opposite it.

The chair of SHIMCA shows some videos of performances at schools and diverse events across the Highlands executed by young people from the association. The intention is to broadcast Chinese culture among the local people, but in addition, to exchange with Highland culture. SHIMCA's recognition of the Scottish culture has even made possible a tartan they have created for the association.

The police officer attending gives a brief talk about how they are operating in the area, what their current organisation is and what the best way is to ask for help if necessary.

Finally, there is a responsible person from the NHS, explaining to the community the medical control they would recommend following in the area.

Once the performance is over, the chair introduced my study and asked for volunteers. Unfortunately, none of the Young People (YP) is from the catchment area where I intend to do my research. Nevertheless, during the event I had the chance to speak to several YP and asked about their experiences in the Highlands. At lunch-time (the food consisted of a local menu) I had the good luck to listen to a 25-year-old Chinese male sitting at our round table. He was communicative and explained that he was living in a remote village in the North East of the Highlands, where he was working doing the carryout for his parents' business. He used to have some local friends during his studies in a central town in the Highlands, but he lost contact with them after he finished at school. That was after he moved to the remote village to help his parents with their takeaway s and where he was currently living. This YP explained that he was going back to China in a couple of months because he felt bored in the village and had no friends. He was looking forward to his return to China to do a training course that he had already applied for, and to starting a new life there.

EID Festival (Meeting the Muslim community in the Highlands):

I meet the chair of the Pakistani Association in the Highlands at an Indian restaurant in Inverness at the beginning of October.

In that meeting he kindly invites not only myself but also my husband and younger daughter to join the Muslim community at Eid Festival on Saturday 27th October.

At EID I make contact with some YP: a 20-year-old girl who was visiting her mother during a break in her university studies. She is doing a dentistry degree at Glasgow University. She said she would marry someone Muslim and close to her background, but she is choosing an option that takes account of her opinion on that.

The festival is celebrated in a sport venue in the outskirts of Inverness. During the festival there is an inflatable castle for the kids to play on. There are two long sets of tables displayed, where the people attending leave big dishes and pots with Indian food. One table is for males and another for females.

A male 17-year-old came from England and was at Inverness College doing Highers to start law at Aberdeen University the following year. So he was soon leaving the Highlands.

It seemed, after talking to several YP like the above, and to some adults, that the majority of Pakistani YP, if not all, leave the Highlands to follow higher studies in cities in the Central Belt.

<u>The Indian Association</u>

I met the Chair of the Indian Association in the Highlands in October before I attended EID. I was invited to another celebration but this time I was asked to pay an amount I found excessive. Additionally, it seemed that the Indian association tends to ignore those in lower careers, such as those working in hotels or restaurants. I wondered about the staff I encountered at a remote Hotel. They were all Indian! but never heard of the association.

Overall, it was interesting meeting all these associations. They were providing valuable information about minorities in the area, despite my being unable to find any participants through the events and meetings.

I also met the Chair of the Multicultural association.

She organises activities for the minorities who do not find a space in the other groups in communities in Inverness, to help them, especially women, socialise. They have a sewing group and inter-faith picnics among other things. She is very active and is well aware of the racism the minority community experiences in the Highlands.

Meet an ESOL Teacher at Inverness College. She is very cooperative and puts me in touch with one of the stakeholders: an ESOL Development Officer who became a participant after some persistence.

Meet an ESOL Teacher thanks to the offer from a College at Remote. She agrees to help. She has not come back after several emails. I will try to call her again. She finally cooperates.

Stage 2. Dates: Second half November and December 2012

Producing Leaflets. Patrolling Streets

After finding that gatekeepers are not facilitating much, I decided to make leaflets and to work at patrolling the streets of both settlements. For that, I go to every restaurant, retail place, hotel and accommodation where I notice that there are black and minority people: carry outs, shops, colleges, sports centres, Youth centres, Youth cafés, both libraries. I leave some leaflets calling for participants every week for two months. I spend Monday and Tuesdays at Remote and Wednesdays and Thursdays at Accessible. Fridays I have a tutorial at the University.

I talk to people about my research in each of those places. I have made some contacts. I had a call last week at Remote with a potential participant. He is 22. He wants to do it. I met him Tuesday the 4th, but he explained he had some sad news from Pakistan and would prefer not to do it. We agreed to meet for an interview next.

Monday 10th. After two trips with petrol and accommodation expenses, that interview never happened.

The Youth Officer at the remote area has finally agreed to meet on 10th December. That will be the last time I hear from him. He never answered any email or phone call after that.

His equivalent at Accessible has accepted a meeting on 19th December.

I attempt to contact Marine Harvest recruit office responsible. After what seemed a very promising phone conversation, I only found SILENCES: one email after the other. The initial call offering some cooperation never succeeded.

At this point I decided I am getting a disclosure check just in case I need to go into schools. I am getting gradually more desperate about recruiting participants.

The Polish community has not come back at all. It is completely closed and silent.

No answer at all after several emails to the ones accountable for the community, even when approaching some Polish YP working in a takeaway.

Overall, Silences. Silences. Silences…. It is the most common response in my research so far.

Stage 3: From Wednesday 16th January 2013:

Meeting with a helpful youth officer

Finding spontaneous support when patrolling Accessible

The success of leaflets: at last!

Meeting with a helpful Youth Officer at Accessible.

In the other area of the Highlands I have been more fortunate. I finally succeeded in contacting the second officer by phone. His cooperation turns out to be very valuable for this study; he has agreed to hold a meeting where he has explained about High Life Highland and his job. He also provides seven participants for this work.

Success with Patrolling and Leaflets at last!

Today (February 2013), while patrolling, I also met a father of a 16-year-old from the Chinese community at Remote. He showed some interest in his son participating in this study. He seemed worried about his son's latest school results. Parents could be a way to recruit YP. Most cultures need that step to access them.

Patrolling is yielding results! I have recruited another four participants. Excitement is growing. It happened while I was having some soup at an Accessible café. In the distance, I could clearly hear a female speaking in Spanish on a mobile. Without hesitating, I jumped from my table once she finished and approached her. She turned out to be an extremely helpful and cooperative ally in this research. She produced four contacts and my first interview with a young person. I could not believe my luck!

Two more followed some time later and another with one of the parents. I was very pleased with my persistence and the opportunity that patrolling brought.

Stage 4: Interviews with Young people

Notes from fieldwork: EID Celebration in the Highlands.

Picture 1. Children playing at an inflatable castle.

Picture 2. Young People catching up and waiting for lunch.

Appendix 5: Interviews

5.1. Young People.

Interview for Minority Young People in the Highlands.

I. Background:

Tell me a bit about yourself at present e.g. who you live with, where you live, your family or home set up, how long in the Highlands, previous places you have lived, school you went to, languages you speak (at home and outside).

II. Life at the moment:

Can you tell me a little about your life now?
(work/studying/volunteering/unemployed/…)

Do you find what you do enjoyable, rewarding?

Is there anything you would change/improve?

Are you feeling well treated? At school? Work?

III. Future Hopes and Aspirations:

Can you tell me about your hopes for the future? e.g. employment, studies, life in general (here you would need to prompt what kind of employment, studies that might wish to pursue)

How might you go about achieving these?

Is there anyone in particular or any organization that you think might assist you achieving these hopes and aspirations?

What are the opportunities that you think are provided for you?

What might prevent them from being met?

IV. Living in the Highlands?

Can you see yourself staying here? If yes, why and how long for If not, why not?

What would you improve? (or what advice might you give other minority ethnic young people wanting to move to Dingwall (or Fort William)?

Is there anything else you might wish to share with me that have not been mentioned?

Thank you for your time!

Exploring Black and Minority Ethnic Young People's Experiences and Life Aspirations in The Highlands. Young People Interview 2012/2013. P. Cacho

5.2. Parents.

Interview for Minority Ethnic Young People's Parents

Male/Female: Years in Scotland:

Ethnicity:

Current Occupation:

I. Background:

1. Tell me a bit about yourself at present (e.g. where are you from, what have you studied, how long in the Highlands, previous places you have lived, languages you speak (at home and outside),

    1.1. If you are from outside the Highlands. How was your experience when you arrived here? Please give details. How you felt, language, being accepted…

    1.2. if yes, can you describe what is being a different culture parent?

II. Experience as a (Minority Ethnic young person's) parent.

2.1. Can you describe your experience as a (minority ethnic) parent of black and minority young people in the Highlands?

2.2. Have you had any support/ advice from any institution to assist you with your son/daughter/children? If yes:

    2.2.1 What organizations/institutions has been supporting you with her/him/them? Can you explain about this?

2.3. Do you feel you have enough support from school/community/ local authorities? Why yes or why no?

2.4. Can you tell about any possible issues your son/daughter children may be having in any of the above: school/community/local authorities?

2.5. Is? Are your daughter/son children having a positive/happy experience in the Highlands? Why yes or why not?

III. Aspirations of Minority Young People for parents:

3.1. What are your hopes for the future for your son/daughter? e.g. employment, studies, life in general

3.1.1. What kind of employment, studies they might wish to get?

3.1.2. Do you know about what your daughter/son children want?

3.2. How do you think they might go about achieving these?

3.3. Is there anyone in particular or any organisation that you think might assist them in achieving these hopes and aspirations?

3.4. What are the opportunities that you think are provided for Minority Young People /your son /daughter where they live?

3.5. What might prevent Minority Young People's aspirations from being met in the Highlands?

IV. Living in the Highlands?

4.1. Can you see your son/daughter staying here? If yes, why and how long for If not, why not?

4.2. What would you improve? (or what advice might you give to other black and minority ethnic young people wanting to move to Dingwall (or Fort William)?

V. Is there anything else you might wish to share with me that have not been mentioned?

Thank you for your time!

5.3. Stakeholders.

Interview for Stakeholders working with Minority Young People.

Male/Female:

Years in Scotland:

Ethnicity:

Current Occupation:

I. Background:

Can you describe your current occupation?

What is your position (in the organisation/association)?

II. Work with Minority Young People. Work in The Highlands:

2.1. Can you tell me a little about your work with Minority Young People?

2.2. What made you choose this job? (Money, like young people…)

2.3. Do you find what you do enjoyable, rewarding? Why yes, why not/

2.4. Is there anything you would change/improve in your work with Minority Young People?

III. Aspirations of Minority Young People:

3.1. What do you think are the hopes for the future of the Minority Young People you work with? e.g. employment, studies, life in general

3.2. What kind of employment, studies they might wish to pursue?

3.3. How do you think they might go about achieving these?

3.4. Is there anyone in particular or any organisation that you think might assist them in achieving these hopes and aspirations?

3.5. What are the opportunities that you think are provided for black and minority young people where they live?

3.6 What might prevent black and minority young people's aspirations from being met in the Highlands?

IV. Living in the Highlands?

4.1. Can you see MEYP staying here? If yes, why and how long for If not, why not?

4.2. What would you improve? or what advice might you give other minority ethnic young people wanting to move to Dingwall (or Fort William)?

V. Is there anything else you might wish to share with me that has not been mentioned?

Thank you for your time!

Exploring Black and Minority Ethnic Young People's Experiences and Life Aspirations in The Highlands. Stakeholders working with/around Minority Young People's Interview 2013. P. Cacho

Appendix 6: Explanation Leaflet and Consent Form:

LIFE AMBITIONS OF MINORITY YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE HIGHLANDS.

What is this study about?

This study is part of my doctoral study at the University of Edinburgh. I would like to explore the life ambitions of young people with diverse cultural background living in the Highlands.

It will be important to hear your views as a young person with a diverse cultural background. What are your hopes and ambitions for the future. This study brings an opportunity to listen to your voices. For that I would appreciate your help and invite you to be part of this research.

Who will participate?

I would like to interview young people from different cultural backgrounds aged 17- 25. For example, either you or your parents born outside the UK, speaking a different language than English at home, with a different faith from Christian, different ethnicities…

Participants should ideally be born in Scotland or if you are born elsewhere that you have lived in the Highlands for a minimum of three years.

What will happen along the interview?

I would like to meet you for about an hour. During this time, I will ask you about your expectations and hopes for your future.

The interview might mean looking back into the past to understand what has been your experience in your school life and in your community.

It could be possible that I might contact you for a second interview or invite you to participate in a focus group interview in the future. This will be with your logical consent beforehand.

Where will the interview take place?

The interviews will be in a place mutually agreed. This will imply somewhere comfortable for discussion but that also allows some privacy necessary for this research.

Ethical considerations

The preference for this study is to have interviews recorded. However, this needs to count with your permission beforehand.

All interviews and the information collected will remain confidential and anonymous. It will not be possible to identify you in the final study. You can stop the interview at any time, or choose not to answer certain questions. You can also withdraw from the study at any time.

Who will have access to the results?

Patricia Cacho as the student researcher together with my supervisors

Dr Rowena Arshad and Dr Akwugo Emejulu at the School of Education, University of Edinburgh will be the only people who will have access to the data.

The recorded information will be protected at the end of the fully completion of this study.

The information will be stored in a safe area and will not be shared with anyone. In the final thesis all participants will be made anonymous.

I also commit to provide you with a brief outcome of the study if you wish

Contact details

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INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT

1. I understand that my participation is strictly voluntary and that I may withdraw from the research at any time, without giving any reason.
2. I am aware of what my participation will involve.
3. I am aware that my participation in the interview will be recorded.
4. I am aware that the information collected in my participation for this study will be only used for research purposes and not otherwise.
5. I understand that there are no risks involved in the participation of this study.
6. I am willing/not willing to be contacted again for another interview or a group discussion

I agree to participate.

Participant's signature: _____

Participant's name (please print): _____

Date: _____

Contact details

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